



## **Samoa Gender Achievement Gap Report**

*An exploration of factors contributing to male students' underachievement in Samoa*

# THE SAMOA GENDER ACHIEVEMENT GAP REPORT

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Report prepared by the Policy, Planning and Research Division (PPRD)

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SAMOA

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A'eau Chris Hazelman,

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The persisting and growing gap between the achievement of female students and male students in primary and secondary Schools in national and regional exams is of great concern to the Samoa Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture. The Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessments (PILNA) Samoa Report 2018 revealed a huge discrepancy between female and male students' achievements. Results published in the MESC Statistical Digest over the years also show a persistent gender gap in the achievement of female and male students in Samoa's primary and secondary schools, with males student performance lagging behind that of their female counterparts. In response to such trends, the Ministry opted to carry out a research study to explore the reasons associated with male students' poor academic achievements in primary and secondary schools across the country. The Ministry anticipates that this study will help identify solutions to gradually improve male students' achievements in education. There is not much research into this issue in Samoa; however, this topic has been the subject of wide research globally. The issue of male student underachievement in schools is a global issue that is experienced by many countries.

A mixed method study was undertaken in 2021 by the Samoa Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, led by the Policy, Planning and Research Division, and with the assistance of MESC staff from the Information, Communication Technology and Media Division (ICT&M), and the Corporate Service Division (CSD). The study drew on data collected through individual interviews with parents, online questionnaires administered to students and offline (hard copy) questionnaires for the teachers and principals along with schools having poor internet reception. These research methods were developed by PPRD with the contributions of MESC Core Executive and Education Sector Research Committee (ESRC) and were chosen for the effectiveness, ease of implementation and reliability.

The study involved two thousand, four hundred and two ( $N=2,402$ ) participants. Participants comprised of one thousand, seven hundred and twenty-two ( $N=1,722$ ) students selected from forty-eight (48) Government, Mission, and Private Primary and Secondary schools where huge gender achievement gaps existed, one hundred and seventy-two ( $N=172$ ) teachers, principals, and vice-principals teaching the same partaking students and five hundred and eight ( $N=508$ ) parents of the student participants. Student participants were selected from year levels sitting National Exams over the last two years; these were Year 4, 6, and 8 at primary level along with Year 12 and 13 at secondary level.

### Main Findings

Boys' responses indicate that the majority are doing 'the right thing' in relation to study habits most or all of the time. For example, just under half of participating male students in secondary school set study goals all or most of the time, with 48% at Year 13 and 49% in Year 12 responding in this manner. In

addition, the majority of participating male students in all year levels indicated that they have access to needed stationery all or most of the time, and study ahead of a test most or all of the time (except in Year 4).

The majority of participating male students report a positive experience at home. For example, the majority of participating male students in all year levels reported that they have a peaceful home to study; however, up to 10% in Years 8 and 4 say that they do not have a peaceful home to study. Similarly, according to participating male students, less than two thirds, but more than half, of their parents know their school progress all or most of the time; however, for Year 4 – this proportion is less than half. The majority of primary school participating male students indicate that their parents do chores all or most of the time, so they have time to study.

However, some aspects of male students' experiences at home are not so positive. For example, between 41% (Year 13) and 51% (Year 12) of participating boys report that they spend more time on chores compared to studying. This is a high percentage, indicating that boys tend to be responsible for home chores, with more than half in Year 12 responding this way.

More than 10% of participating male students at every year level except Year 13 responded that their parents never talk with their teacher about their progress. Additionally, between 44% to 53% of all participating male students had experienced not being able to communicate with their parents at some point

Although boys respond mostly positively about their experiences at home and at school (except for being responsible for chores), they do report a more negative experience at school compared to girls. For example, the majority feel their teachers care more for female students in the classroom. An average of one in two boys in primary school has experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher at school, one in three in Year 13, and just under half of Year 12 boys.

Boys' learning difficulties start in primary school with reading, writing, English and Mathematics. Year 4 seems a particularly difficult year for boys, where for example, the majority experience problems reading, writing, English, never set study goals and do not tend to study ahead of a test. In addition to their learning difficulties, one in five male students at Year 4 has experienced bullying, and one in two has experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school.

The responses in this research indicate a strong gender stereotype exists in the minds of parents and teachers. For example, the responses of teachers and parents paint a strongly negative picture of male students and a strongly positive picture of female students. Their comments suggest that they consider boys to have mostly negative attitudes towards school and authority, and that female students are the opposite, and this in the minds of teachers and parents is the reason why boys underachieve, and girls achieve success.

Parents and teachers' responses lay the blame for male student underachievement on the student's behaviour. In contrast however, what participating boys say about themselves and their study habits disagrees with what parents and teachers say. Teachers and parents agree that boys have less motivation to go to school and study – this is critical and needs further research to understand why boys are responding this way to schooling and learning.

#### Recommendation 1 (Immediate term)

The findings of this report indicates that primary school literacy and numeracy support for boys is critical. It is recommended that existing literacy and numeracy interventions are strengthened and reviewed to find out whether their implementation has been effective. Other interventions could be explored to support literacy and numeracy support for boys, in particular in primary school. An example of an intervention that could be explored is having a dedicated daily reading time in schools, and other activities that teachers could do to help make reading fun.

#### Recommendation 2 (Immediate term)

It is strongly recommended that all effort is made to eliminate bullying in schools. Some activities that might contribute towards this goal include a review of the implementation of the MESCS School Governance Framework 2018-2028 along with the Safe School Policy. The message about eliminating bullying must be disseminated to principals and teachers at every opportunity, for example through professional development activities organised by the Ministry as well as the upcoming Teachers' Conference.

#### Recommendation 3 (Immediate term)

It is recommended that measures are taken to eliminate physical, verbal and emotional abuse of students by teachers in schools. Some of the activities that may contribute to this include the enforcement of the zero corporal punishment law, and discussions with the Teachers' Council on ways to discourage and eliminate physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of students by teachers in schools.

#### Recommendation 4 (Medium term)

It is recommended that a collaborative action research project be undertaken, involving the Ministry, the NUS Faculty of Education, and selected school leaders, to focus on identifying and changing harmful teaching practices that de-motivate male students and increase disengagement, and identifying and supporting positive teaching practices that increase the motivation and engagement of all students.

#### Recommendation 5 (Medium term)

It is recommended that district level reports be created from this data, to indicate patterns in study habits and experiences of home and school across different districts, and for these reports to be shared with School Support Advisors (asiasiaoga), to inform their support work.

### Recommendation 6 (Long term)

It is recommended that a research project be undertaken in the long term, to focus on gender stereotypes and how they influence teacher and student behaviour and student performance in schools, as well as how to combat the negative impacts of such stereotypes on student achievement in general and male student achievement in particular.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful influence on every person's life regardless of their background. Excellence in education provides the foundation for a sustainable and productive life that is free of poverty. Education provides the skills to understand, reason, deal with different situations and critically resolve unforeseen problems. Education includes all institutions that facilitate the teaching and learning processes for children, adolescents, teenagers, and adults alongside every governing body mandating and overseeing these educational institutions.

### 1.1 Education in Samoa

The Constitution of Samoa speaks little for Education purposes however Clause 12 of this supreme law (Govt of Samoa, 2016) articulates the significance of any other laws constituting the standards and quality maintenance of general education in Samoa. The Education Act 2009, Teachers Act 2016 and Amendments, Strategy for the Development of Samoa, Samoa Education Sector Plan, MESC Corporate Plan, along with the number of implementing policies, standards of procedures, and operation manuals provide direction for general education in the country as a whole. These are a few of the countless legislation, regulations, strategies, and policies mandating the Education Sector of Samoa and its objectives.

The strategic direction for the Samoa education sector is implemented through its three (3) implementing agencies; the Samoa Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, the Samoa Qualifications Authority (SQA), and the National University of Samoa (NUS). Together these three agencies aim to achieve the strategic goals outlined in the Samoa Education Sector Plan 2019-2024. MESC provides three levels of education ranging from Early Childhood Education (ECE) preparing children at the compulsory age<sup>1</sup> of 4 years old pre-primary school, the Primary and Secondary Education admitting children reaching the compulsory age of 5 and 16 years old. MESC in particular acts as a policy, planning and regulatory body for the schools<sup>2</sup> and the ECE.

Out of the thirty-four (34) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Education Sector Plan (ESP) 2019 – 2024<sup>3</sup> the first two (2) of the nine (9) KPIs measured areas which appeared favourable to the Education Sector progress are the students' achievements rates in literacy and numeracy. Aside from the improvement in students' achievements over the years, analysis of several recent publications indicates a growing gap between male and female student achievement.

The 2016 Gender Review complementing UNESCO's annual Global Education Monitoring Report stated that in 2014, gender parity was achieved globally, on average, in primary, lower secondary, and

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<sup>1</sup> Tabulated in the Education Amendment Act 2019

<sup>2</sup> Schools including Mission, Private and Government Primary and Secondary schools

<sup>3</sup> (Education Sector Plan , 2019-2024)

upper secondary education’ (UNESCO, 2016). Importantly, these global estimates included high-income countries, where school enrollments are even among gender but where boys are occasionally disadvantaged relative to girls. Based on analyses of Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from thirty-eight (38) low-income countries including Samoa, Grant and Behrman (2010) found that, on a regional level, gender gaps in primary school completion were fully explained by gaps in enrollment rather than in grade progression. From 1990 to 2006, conditions on school enrollment, and gender parity in primary school completion had been achieved in all regions studied, with an emerging female advantage (*ibid.*). The 2015 UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report reiterated similarly (UNESCO, 2016). Rather than this advantage simply reflecting the number of girls who had ever enrolled in schools, female advantage in attainment is rooted in the higher proportion of females enrolled in schools between 1990 and 2006.

Owing to these facts, female students outperformed male students in assessments’ achievements locally and regionally. This raised concerns to discover the roots of this prevailing issue which may become a basis for more approaching problems in the education system.

## 1.2 Background to the Issue

### 1.2.1 Samoa Population Census 2016

Samoa has successfully achieved gender parity in enrollment rates in education (EFA Taskforce, 2015) (MESC, 2020) (MESC , 2021). By the 2016 Population Census, of 92,704 citizens aged three to twenty-four (3-24) years old expecting to attend schools, only sixty-seven percent (67%) (62,252 persons) actually attended schools. This proportion consists of sixty-six percent (66%) of males and sixty-nine percent (69%) of females. Thirty-six percent (36%) of these age groups are not attending schools (thirty-four percent (34%) of the male population and thirty-one percent (31%) of the female population) despite the mandatory school attendance articulated in the Education Amendment Act 2019 (Government of Samoa, 2019). The majority of school leavers are males. In addition, females tend to complete and reach higher educational opportunities than males. Out of 902 children aged 6 to 16 years not attending schools, sixty-two percent (62%) are males and eighty percent (80%) of the same population and age group are from rural areas (Roberts-Aiafi, 2020).

### 1.2.2 PILNA 2018 – Samoa Report

The Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment generally known as PILNA is a regional program developed in 2006 in conjunction by the EQAP, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the heads of Education Systems or their representatives from fifteen (15) participating Pacific Islands<sup>4</sup>. PILNA exhibits a benchmark of the literacy and numeracy skills for students who have reached their fourth and sixth-year levels verifying the quality of education for the participating countries accomplished so far.

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<sup>4</sup> Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue (New Zealand), Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu & Vanuatu.



The PILNA Report 2018 highlighted the considerable gender gap across literacy and numeracy at Year Levels 4 and 6 specifically in Samoa with males substantially underachieving compared to female students.

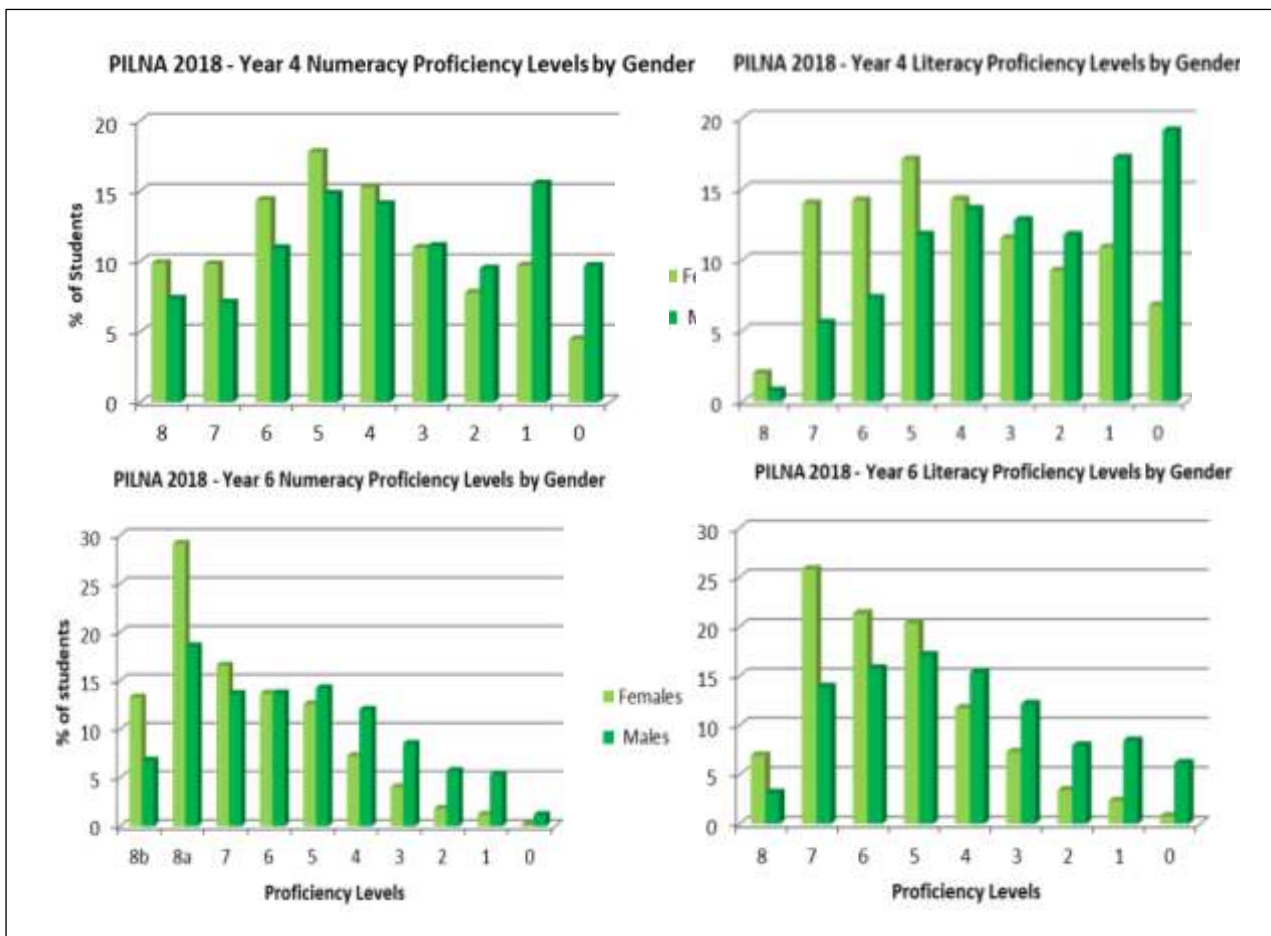


Figure 1. PILNA 2018 Years 4 & 6 Proficiency Levels in Literacy & Numeracy by Gender for Samoa

The higher proficiency levels of assessment for the PILNA are 6 to 8, the average levels are 3 to 5 and the lower levels are 0 to 2 (EQAP, 2015). Figure 1 shows a significant gap between male and female student achievement in Samoa. As shown in Figure 1, there is a higher proportion of females in the higher proficiency levels, and a higher proportion of males in the lower proficiency levels. In addition, a high percentage of female students outstandingly reached the PILNA's highest proficiency levels in all year levels. Recognizing the disparity between male and female student achievement, the PILNA Taskforce requested MESC to bring to light the roots of the issue for a logical solution (EQAP, 2019).

### 1.2.3 MESC Statistical Digest

The MESC Education Statistical Digest is one of the Ministry's annual publications, containing data on enrolment rates in the first three levels of education from ECE to Secondary Education in every Mission, Private, and Government school. Also portrayed in this publication are the national examination results in Primary and Secondary schools. National exams over the last four years indicated comparatively similar results as that of the PILNA where male student achievement lags

behind female student achievement in all four National Assessments<sup>5</sup> in Primary and two in Secondary Schools (MESC, 2020).

As Figure 2 shows, there is gender disparity in SSLC Mathematics and SSLC English achievement, from 2016 to 2019. Furthermore, male students' participation and progression into a higher level of education, declined over the years (MESC, 2020). This means that the Gender Parity Index (GPI) widened and is greater than 1.20. Hence the 2019 and 2020 Education Statistical Digest point to the

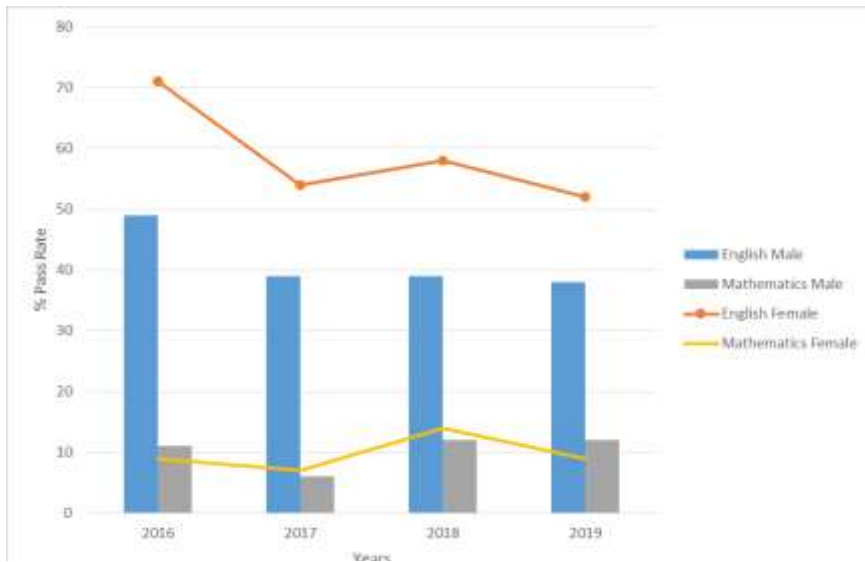


Figure 2. SSLC Pass Rate for English and Maths from 2016-2019 by gender

need for comprehensive research on the causes and roots of gender disparity in student achievement that disadvantages male students.

## CHAPTER 2. PURPOSE

### 2.1 Objectives

The ongoing gender achievement disparity evident in national as well as regional assessment has

driven the Ministry to examine analytically the following objectives. The intention is to bring into light the contributing factors causing the vast majority of male students to perform below the average level of achievements. Correspondingly, the study also looks at the driver behind female students' educational success.

Getting a fair understanding of the factors contributing to male students' underachievement and reasons why a high proportion of female students continually achieved higher, ought to give the Ministry and its stakeholders a fair understanding of where assistance needs to be rendered. The study also intends to analyze the available literature regarding the differences if any between the male and the female brain, and whether these dissimilarities affect their intellectual performance.

### 2.2 Research Questions

Two core research questions were developed to steer this research. These were:

1. What factors contribute to male students' underachievement in primary and secondary schools?
2. What factors contribute to female students' success/ high achievement in primary and secondary schools?

A third research question was originally envisaged for this research regarding the best possible strategies that MESC and stakeholders should use to address the issue of male underachievement.

<sup>5</sup> Samoa Primary Education Literacy Level (SPELL) Years 2, 4 & 6; Samoa Primary Education Certificate Attainment (SPECA) Year 8; Samoa School Certificate (SSC) Year 12 and Samoa Secondary Leaving Certificate (SSLC) Year 13.

However, due to the need to focus on contributing factors in this research, this report makes recommendations on strategies that could be considered, to be the focus of a separate research evaluation report. To answer the research questions, the study explores how students study, how students perceive their home environment as well as how students perceive their school environment. Through this, the study intends to explore:

- The difference if any between boys and girls study habits and patterns
- The relationship between parents and children in the home and the contributions of parents to their children’s studies. At the same time considering the chores and other duties the children need to do to support their parents and families. It is believed that the upbringing of the child in the home plays an important part in their educational development.
- The principal, teachers, and students’ perceptions of the school environment; whether the students are safe and provided with the appropriate support under the mandate of the school management and school governance.

Based on the findings, the study also makes recommendations on possible solutions the Ministry can consider to help mitigate this alarming issue.

## 2.3 Literature Review

The Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA) Report 2018 highlighted significant gender differences in literacy and numeracy achievement in Years 4 and 6, specifically in Samoa. The most apparent difference according to the 2018 PILNA Report is in Year 4 literacy with boys considerably underperforming girls. Following the presentation of findings (in the PILNA Report 2018) and evidence presented on students’ performance in literacy and numeracy, the report recommended that “MESC is strongly encouraged to investigate the reasons why girls are outperforming boys in literacy and numeracy and to use the findings to develop interventions to close the performance gap”.

Gender parity has been achieved in school enrolment, as presented in the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2015 (EFA, 2014), and MESC Statistical Digest 2019 (MESC, 2019). The government of Samoa through the MESC continues to ensure quality education for all and to enforce participation in schools by providing free school fee grants in both primary and secondary schools from Year 9 up to Year 11. Yet, there is still a need for research and discussion of the remaining challenge and the growing concern that boys are overrepresented in at-risk categories and dropout rates in not only the primary but also the secondary schools (EFA, 2014). The issue of male underachievement is not only happening in Samoa alone but is a challenge in the entire world (Majzub & Rais, 2010).

It is possible that numerous contributing factors influence males more than females, causing less than half of secondary school-age males to attend school. The high number of female teachers compared to

male teachers is sometimes blamed for boys' underachievement; however research shows that this is not the root cause (Kelleher et al., 2011). Further research must be done to reveal the 'root causes of the issue which is the underachievement of boys in both primary and secondary education as well as the low participation of males in their secondary education.

Jha & Kelleher, 2006) presented some of the root causes of boys' underachievement and lower participation in Secondary Education including the reformation of school curriculums, school administration processes, and teachers' attitudes and teaching methods. Furthermore, the authors also recommend incorporating optional vocational subjects into secondary schools and be made available for all students especially for boys, as they have obtained from their findings that most boys from rural or lower economic social backgrounds admire vocational subjects rather than the curriculum taught in mainstreams education. However, Jha and Kelleher's (2006) findings could be questioned because the study has been done in a one-gendered vocational school in Samoa. Therefore its findings may not be relevant for all schools. Vocational subjects have been incorporated into the secondary education curriculum in Samoa but the data indicates no change in boys' achievement and their participation is slightly decreasing. Further research about the topic is also recommended.

There is often a question of whether male students' underachievement is due to lower levels of intelligence compared to females. Analytically, the psychological view on the brain nonconformity based on gender is trivially insignificant. The only existing differences thereof are physical by-products of the brain which were never proved to impact or vary the intellectual ability between genders (Eliot et al., 2021; Grant, 2021; Jancke, 2018) along with several modern researchers in their studies focusing on the meta-analysis of the brain by sex/gender explicitly identify that many researchers in over 10 to 50 years in the past used neuro-scientific to partially identify social and behavioural differences between genders however the difference in cognitive ability is never distinctively clear. The only strong factors that can stereotypically design the difference between males' and females' attitudes are the cultural and social surroundings. Therefore, it could be possible that male and female brains might change their structure and functions because of their different experiences and because they are exposed to different social environments. This proves that male students are intelligently equal to female students and which diminishes the myth that parents and teachers acknowledged stating that males are typically ignorant and can fit any job whether outdoor or indoor.

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Method Selection

The methodology utilized for this study is a mixture of questionnaires for teachers, principal, and students along with interviews conducted with parents of the participating students. These methods were found responsive and effective, approachable, and feasible in terms of obtaining the relevant and pertinent data when previously and successfully administered in the Ministry's Extended School Hours (ESH), Samoa Early Grade Reading Assessment (SEGRA), and Drop-out Research Studies. The research tools were developed by MESC PPRD with the input of the MESC Core Executive and the Education Sector Research Committee.

The data for this research was collected using mixed methods. The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods has the potential to be more useful for making policy decisions about business, technology, education, and society (Rocco et al, 2003).

### 3.2 Participants and Sample Selection

Research participants were selected using a purposive sample. A purposive sample is a non-random sampling technique where the research participants are selected because they have the characteristics of the target population for the study (Hibberts et al., 2012). In this case, the participating schools were selected because they have been identified as having a vast gender achievement gap in the national assessment data provided by the MESC Assessment and Examination Division. The sample of schools thus consisted of forty-eight (48) Primary and Secondary Schools in Upolu and Savaii. Schools (with vast gender achievement gaps) were randomly selected from the three regions – Apia Urban, Rest of Upolu and Savaii.

The research participants consisted of fifteen (15) students selected from Years 4, 6, and 8, 12 and 13. The teachers and parents of the student sample were also selected as part of the whole sample of research participants. The number of participants was two thousand, four hundred and two ( $N=2,402$ ). The fifteen (15) students per year level were five (5) high-achieving females, five (5) average-performing males, and five (5) underachieving males.

The student participants were selected by school principals, at the request of the Ministry. An information letter sent to the principals of the selected schools outlined the research purpose and requested selection of students to participate in the research. Furthermore, the letter requested the participation of the principal, 3 teachers from participating primary schools, and 4 teachers from participating secondary schools. The research sample also included parents of selected students, for focus group interviews.

The following section highlights key information relating to the research sample.

### 3.2.1. Participating Students and Schools

As shown in Figure 3, 63% of student participants are male ( $N=1,077$ ) and 37% are female students ( $N=645$ ). Schools with evidence of a large gender achievement gap were randomly selected from the three (3) educational regions. This is summarized in Figure 4.

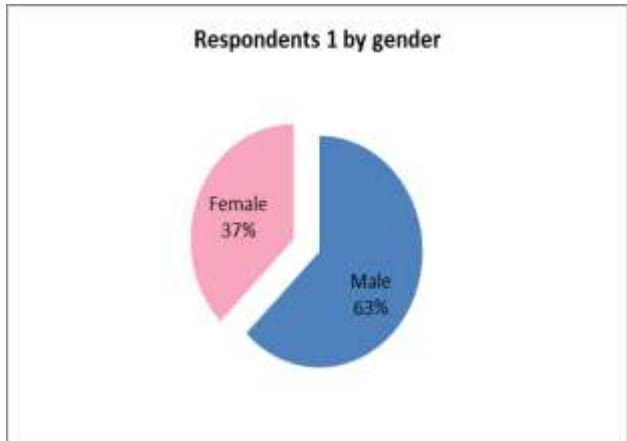


Figure 3. Disaggregation of participating students by gender

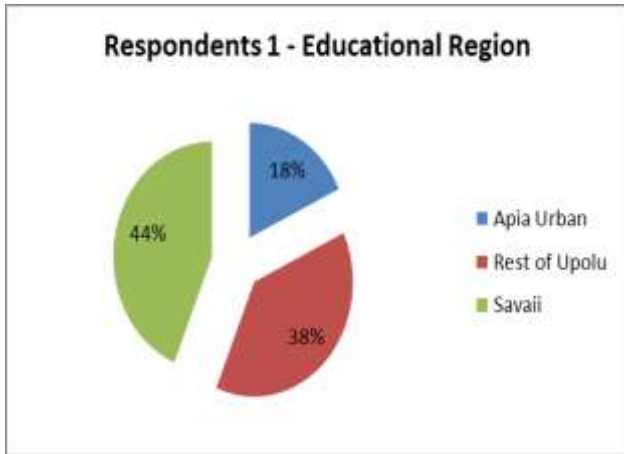


Figure 4. Participating students by educational region

As shown in Figure 4, 44% of participating students were from Savaii, 38% from the Rest of Upolu (ROU) 38%, and 18% from the Apia Urban region. 56% of respondents were from Upolu. The reason for the majority of students being from Upolu is related to the

fact that 69% of 214 schools in Samoa are in Upolu, and 31% in Savaii.

Table 1. Students' participants segregation by gender, educational region and educational level

R1 by Educational Region & By Gender								
	Rest of Upolu		Savaii		Apia Urban		Total	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Male	326 (62%)	80 (59%)	384 (63%)	90 (65%)	132 (63%)	65 (64%)	842	235
Female	198 (38%)	55 (41%)	230 (37%)	49 (35%)	76 (37%)	37 (36%)	504	141
TOTAL	524 (30%)	135 (8%)	614 (36%)	139 (8%)	208 (12%)	102 (6%)	1,722	

48 schools (22%) of all schools in Samoa were involved in this study; 21 schools from Savaii and 27 from Upolu. 21 schools from Savaii comprising 14 government Primary Schools, 4 government Secondary Schools, 2 mission primary schools, and 1 mission Secondary Schools. 27

schools from Upolu Island including 16 government primary schools, 5 government Secondary Schools, 3 mission primary schools, 2 mission Secondary Schools and 1 private Secondary Schools. As shown in Table 1, the actual sample size of R1 is  $n=1722$  which is 524 (30%) ROU Primary School and 135 (8%) Secondary Schools, Savaii has 614 (36%) Primary students and 139 (8%) Secondary Students; and 208 (12%) Primary students and 102 (6%) of Secondary students were from Apia Urban. Out of 524 students from ROU Primary students, 326 (62%) were males and 198 (38%) were females and with 135 Secondary students from the same region 80 (59%) were males and 55 (41%) were females. Of the 614 Primary students from the Savaii region, 384 (63%) were males and 230 (37%) were females and for the 139 secondary students from this particular region 49 (35%) were females and

90 (65%) were males. Apia Urban region has 208 participants from its Primary Schools, 172 (63%) were males and 37 (37%) were females together with 102 secondary students which were 65 (64%) males and 37 (36%) females.

### 3.2.2. Participating Teachers and Parents

7 percent of the overall population of teachers in Samoa participated in this study; this 7% equates to 172 teachers out of a total of 2,418 teachers in Samoa. The participating teachers included teachers of the same year level as the student participants, as well as English and Math teachers in Years 12 and 13. For schools that had no principals at the time of the study, vice-principals were also involved.

Table 2. Participating teachers by educational level and by designation.

	Primary		Secondary		Total
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Principals	10	21	3	6	40
Vice Principals	0	2	3	3	8
Teachers	20	57	17	30	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>172</b>

Table 3. Participating teachers by gender, by years of service, and designation

Teaching Staff	Gender	Years of Service				Total	
		1 week - 10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31-40 years		40+ years
Principals	Males	1	1	8	3	0	13
	Females	3	5	10	7	2	27
Vice Principals	Males	0	1	2	1	0	4
	Females	0	1	2	1	0	4
Teachers	Males	17	10	8	1	1	37
	Females	47	19	10	7	4	87
<b>Total</b>		<b>68</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>172</b>

Five hundred and nine ( $N=509$ ) parents partook in this study and they were parents of the students involved.

## 3.3 Design and Procedures

The selected schools were informed two weeks before the research via letters from the Ministry. The letter included information sheets about the study as well as consent letters for parents and their children, teaching staff, and principals participating in the study.

Online questionnaires were administered to students and teachers for schools that have poor internet reception; hard copies were handed out for completion and were later on entered online by the data collectors. Initially, the subjective information of necessary analysis happens from the cross-referencing of responses from all three target groups to verify the relevancy of their responses.

To ensure uniform usage of research methods, training was conducted by the PPRD Research Unit and ICT for the MESC PPRD and CSD staff involved in the study. The team was thoroughly briefed on

how to administer the online questionnaires among the students and teachers. They were also briefly informed on how to ethically conduct interviews with parents.

Data entered into online forms were automatically entered into the data hub and were later extracted to Microsoft Excel for the analysis of all responses from the participants.

### 3.4 Validation of findings

Validation of findings with research participants took place between May and August 2023.

#### 3.4.1. Online via Moodle

The first part of the validation process involved a video of the report findings being made available on Moodle for all research participating staff. The PPRD team contacted relevant principals and staff to inform them of the availability of the research findings video, for their comment. Principals and staff were requested to view the video of research findings, then provide feedback on Moodle via a form that was created for this purpose. This plan was put in place in accordance with heightened concern about the spread of a severe strain of influenza among the Samoan population, particularly children. The decision to implement an online validation process was in accordance with instructions from MESC leadership to reduce activities requiring group gatherings and face to face contact with school staff and students.

#### 3.4.2. In-person Validation Consultations

The second part of the validation process took place on the 10th and 12th of August in Savaii and Upolu respectively. Principals and staff of schools that participated in the research project were invited to a validation consultation at Salelologa (Savaii) and Malifa (Upolu).

The validation consultations for both Savaii and Upolu followed a similar format. In Savaii, after the initial presentation of research findings by the consultant, participants were invited to discuss and share their feedback in an all-group discussion. They were also then invited to share their individual feedback through a validation feedback form.

In the Upolu validation consultation, participants discussed their feedback to key questions in groups, before completing their individual feedback form. Feedback from the group discussions and individual feedback forms were then collated and summarised in a separate Validation Report.

#### 3.4.3. Validation Materials

The materials used in the validation process included a video presentation of the summarised research findings, a powerpoint presentation, and a validation feedback form. All materials were made available in both Samoan and English for participants to view and comment on.



### 3.4.4 Validation Participants

The invitation to participate in the validation process both online and in person, was extended to all 48 schools who were part of the original research.

The following table provides a summary of validation participants for both the online (Moodle) and face-to-face validation processes.

	Upolu	Savaii	Total
<i>In-person Validation Consultations</i>			
Participants	35	46	81
Schools	19	16	35
<i>Online Validation on Moodle</i>			
Participants	1	7	8
Schools	1	3	4
<i>School Types</i>			
Primary Schools	14	3	17
Secondary Schools	5	3	8

The number of participants at the validation consultations is equivalent to 47% of the original research sample of the teachers/school leadership group. The number of schools that participated in the validation consultations is equivalent to 73% of the total number of schools in the original research.

## CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

### 4.1 Study Habits

#### 4.1.1 Setting study goals

Figure 5. High achieving girls - setting study goals

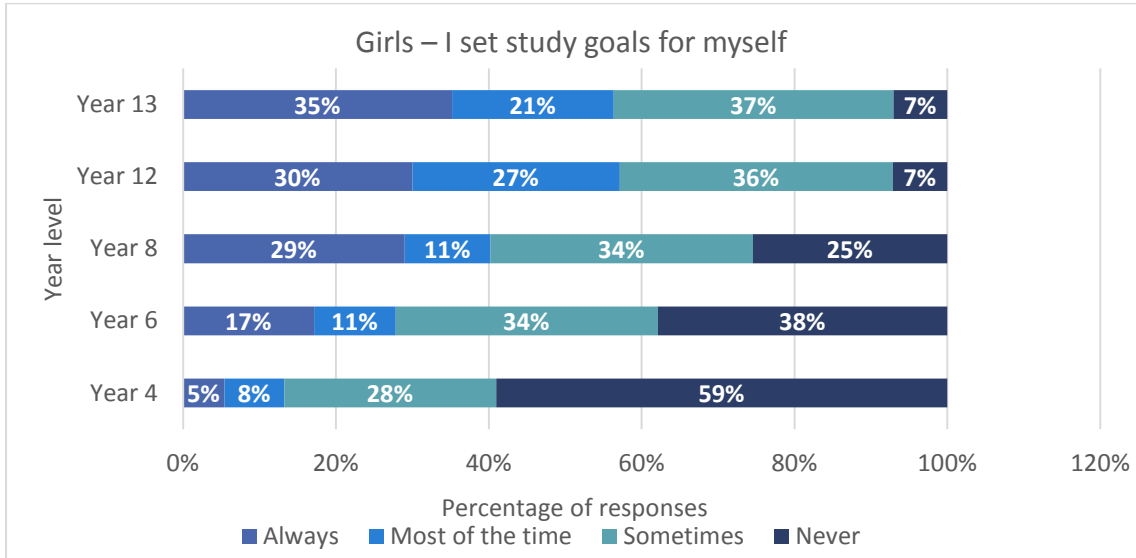
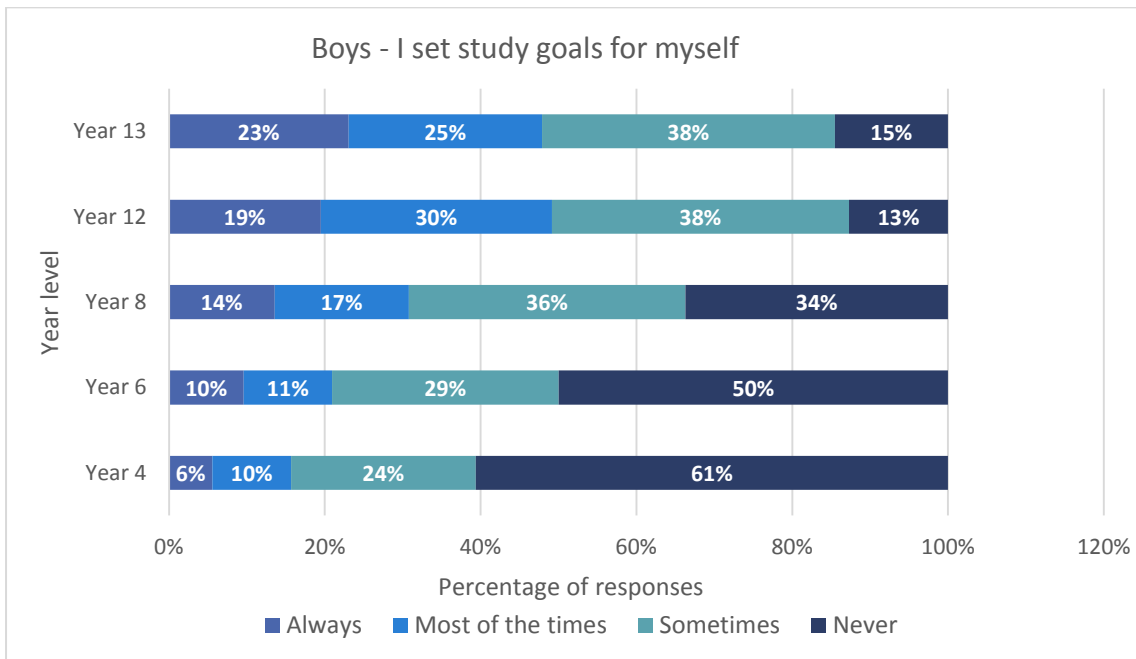


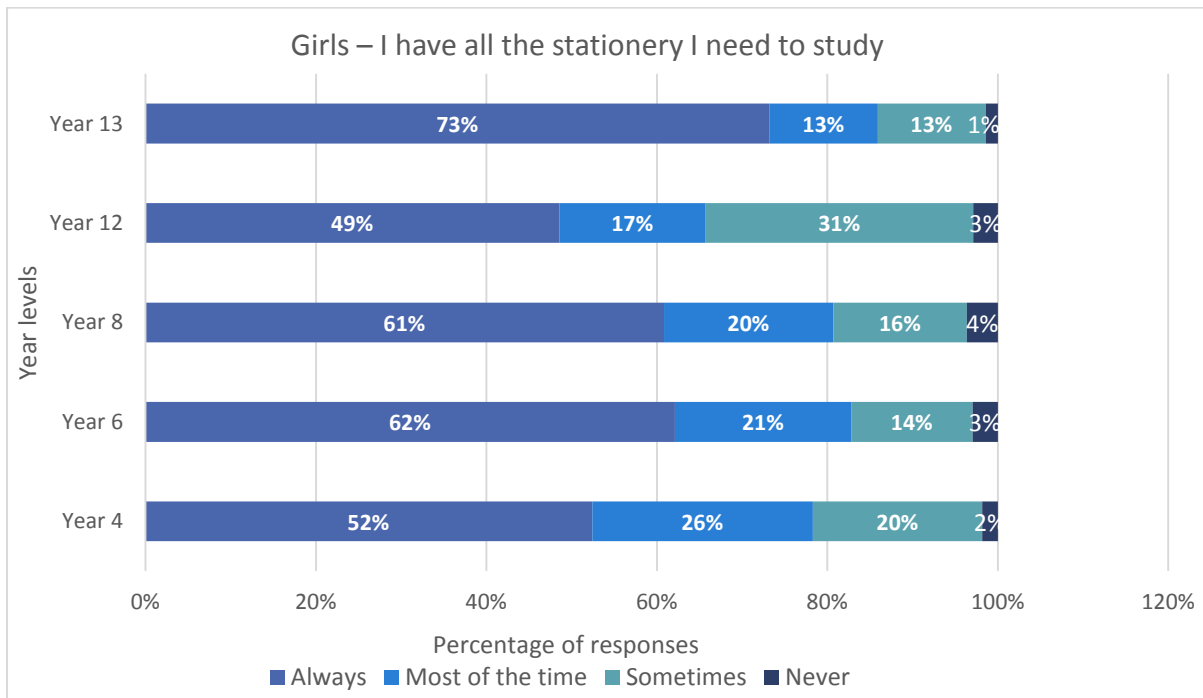
Figure 5 indicates that between 13% to 56% of high-achieving girls set study goals all or most of the time. Figure 6 indicates that between 16% to 48% of low-achieving boys set study goals all or most of the time. A comparison of Figure 5 and Figure 6 shows that more than half (53%) of low-achieving boys at senior levels never or only sometimes set study goals, while 43% of high-achieving secondary school girls never or only sometimes set study goals.

Figure 6. Low-achieving boys - setting study goals



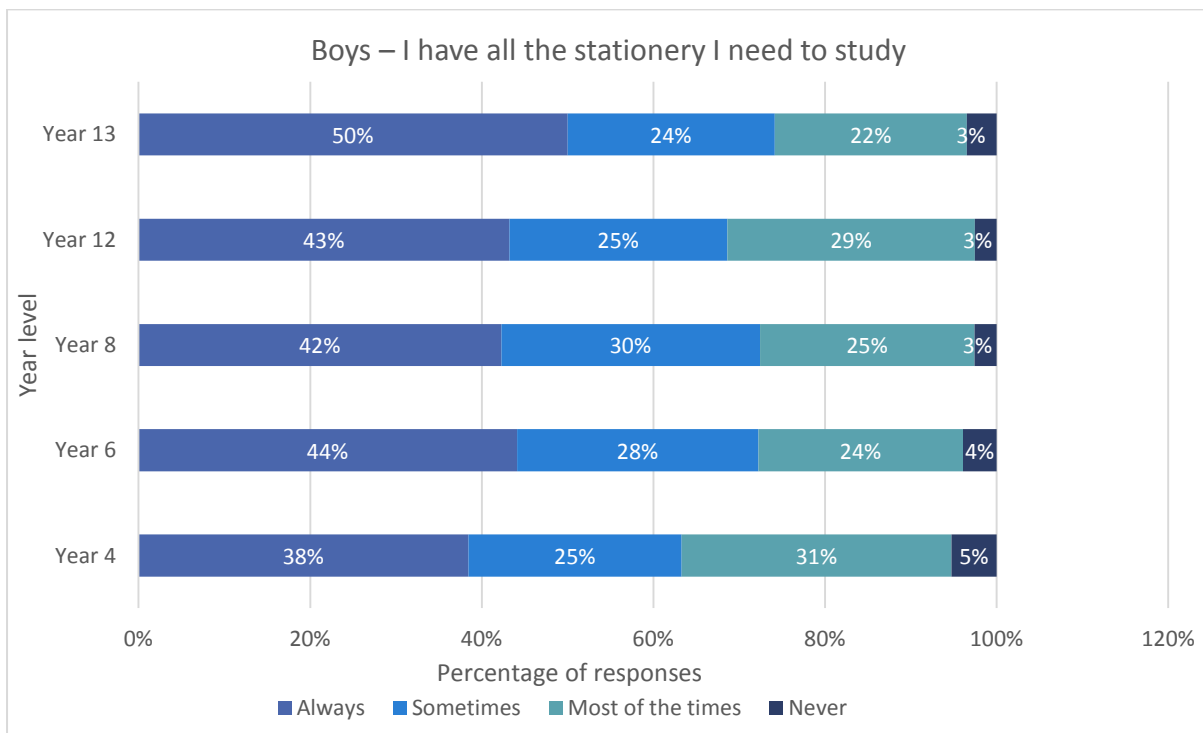
4.1.2 Access to needed stationery

Figure 7. High-achieving girls - access to needed stationery



Regarding access to needed stationery for studying, Figure 7 shows that between 66% to 86% of high-achieving girls have access most or all of the time. Figure 8 shows that 63% to 74% of low-achieving boys report the same level of access (most or all of the time). Worryingly, Figure 8 indicates at least a quarter of all low-achieving boys never or only sometimes have all the needed stationery for study.

Figure 8. Low-achieving boys - access to needed stationery



### 4.1.3 Revision of notes

Figure 9. High achieving girls - revision of notes

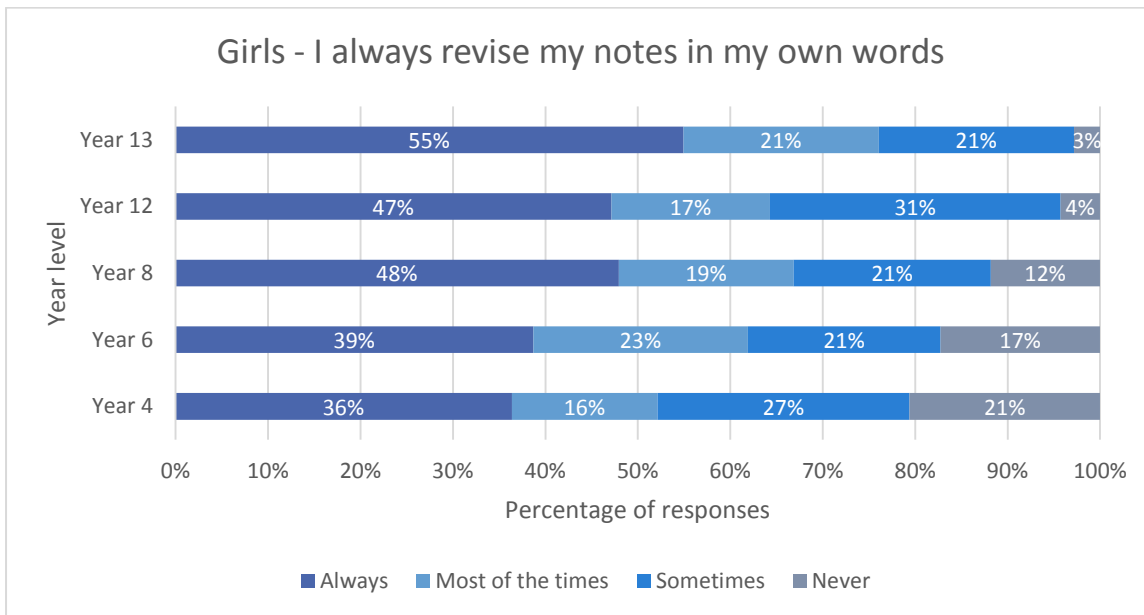
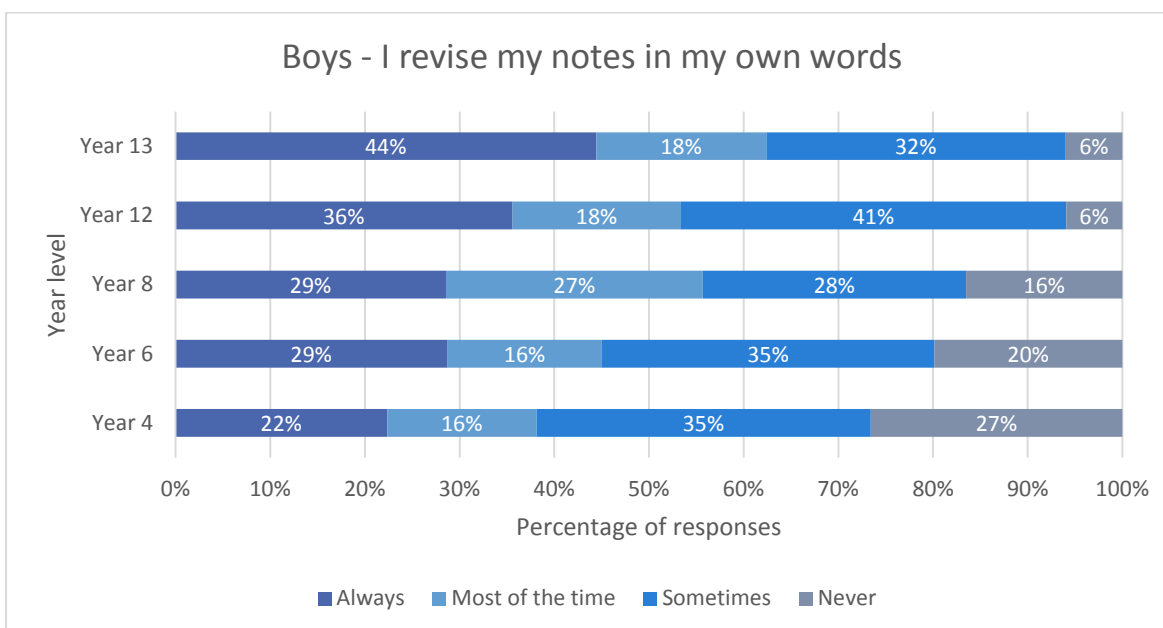


Figure 9 indicates that the majority of high achieving girls at all levels revise their notes in their own words to help them understand what they are learning in class, all or most of the time. The proportions range from 52% in Year 4 to 76% in Year 13.

On the other hand, Figure 10 indicates that the majority of low achieving boys in Years 8 and in secondary school also revise their notes all or most of the time. Their counterparts in the middle and lower primary levels have a lower proportion who report revising their notes all or most of the time.

Figure 10. Low achieving boys - revision of notes



#### 4.1.4 Studying with others

Figure 11. High-achieving girls - studying with others

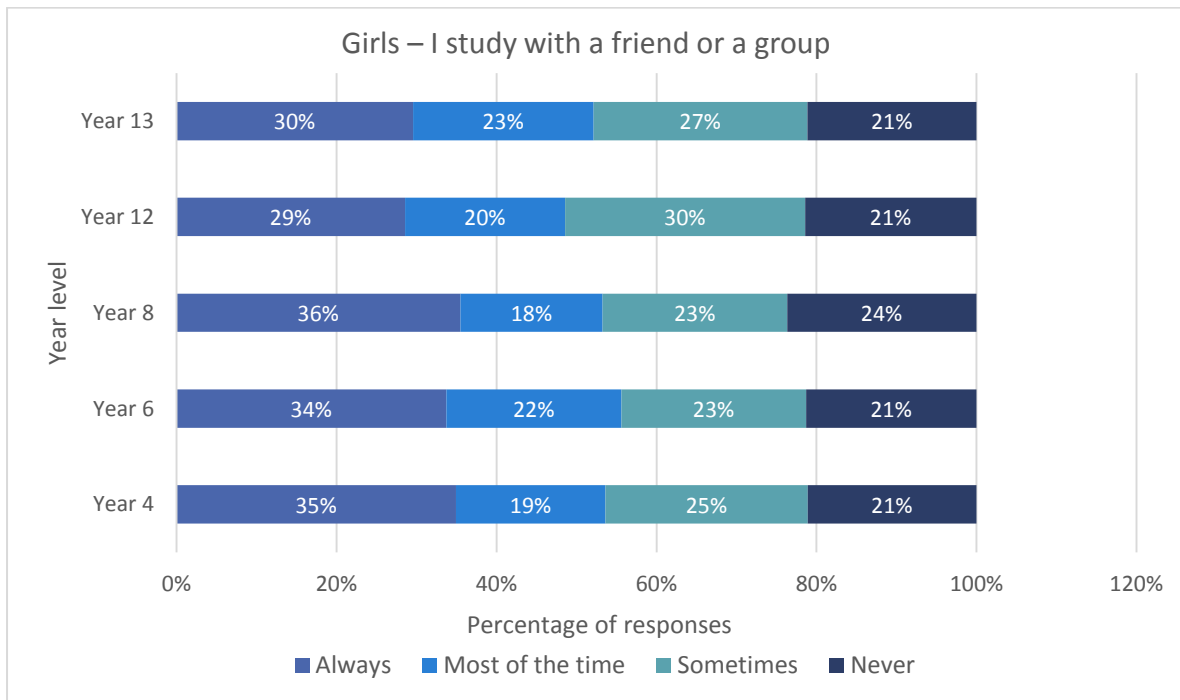
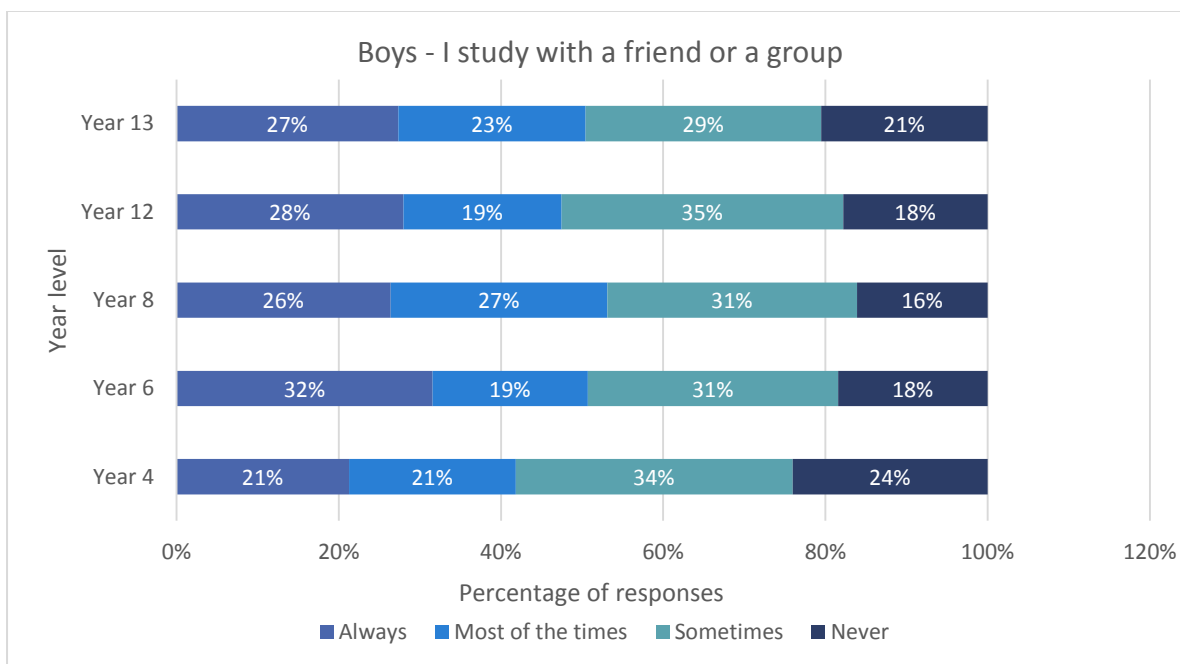


Figure 11 shows that 49% to 54% of high-achieving girls study with a friend or a group, compared to between 42% and 53% of low-achieving boys as indicated in Figure 12. This is not much different. However, a higher proportion of high-achieving girls than low-achieving boys never study with others at all levels except Year 4.

Figure 12. Low-achieving boys- studying with others



#### 4.1.5 Studying ahead of a test

Figure 13. High achieving girls - studying ahead of a test

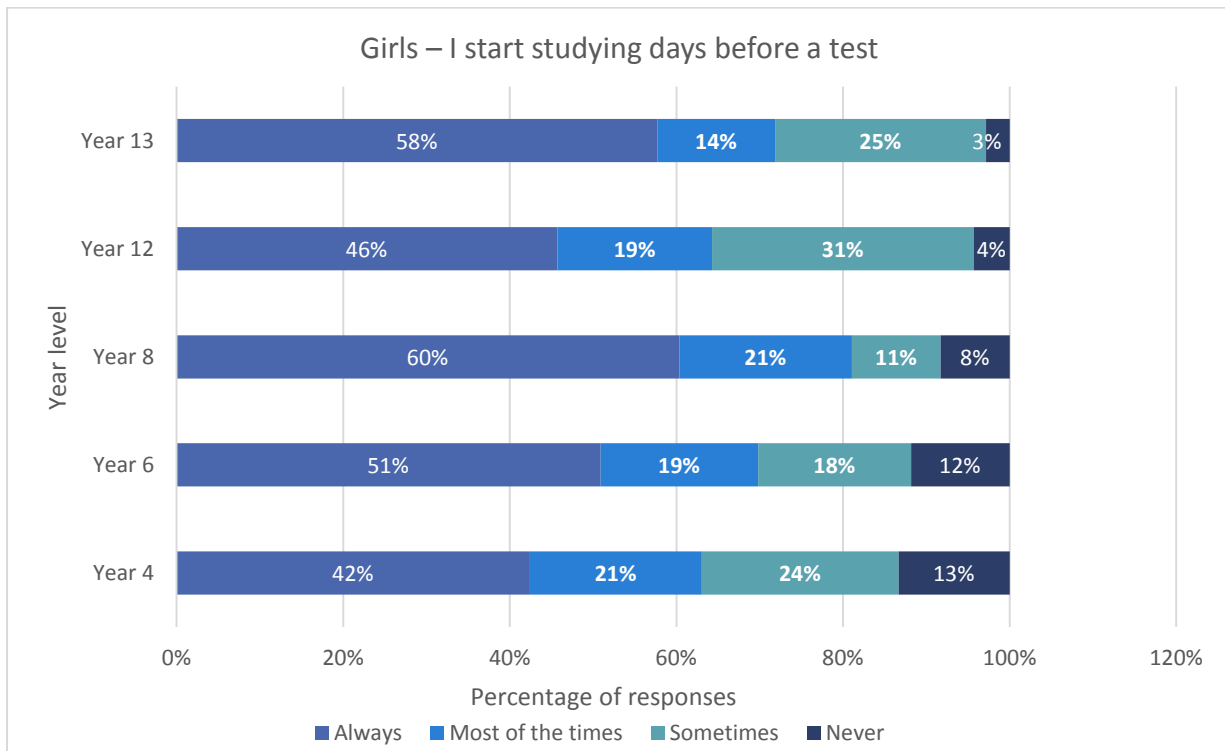
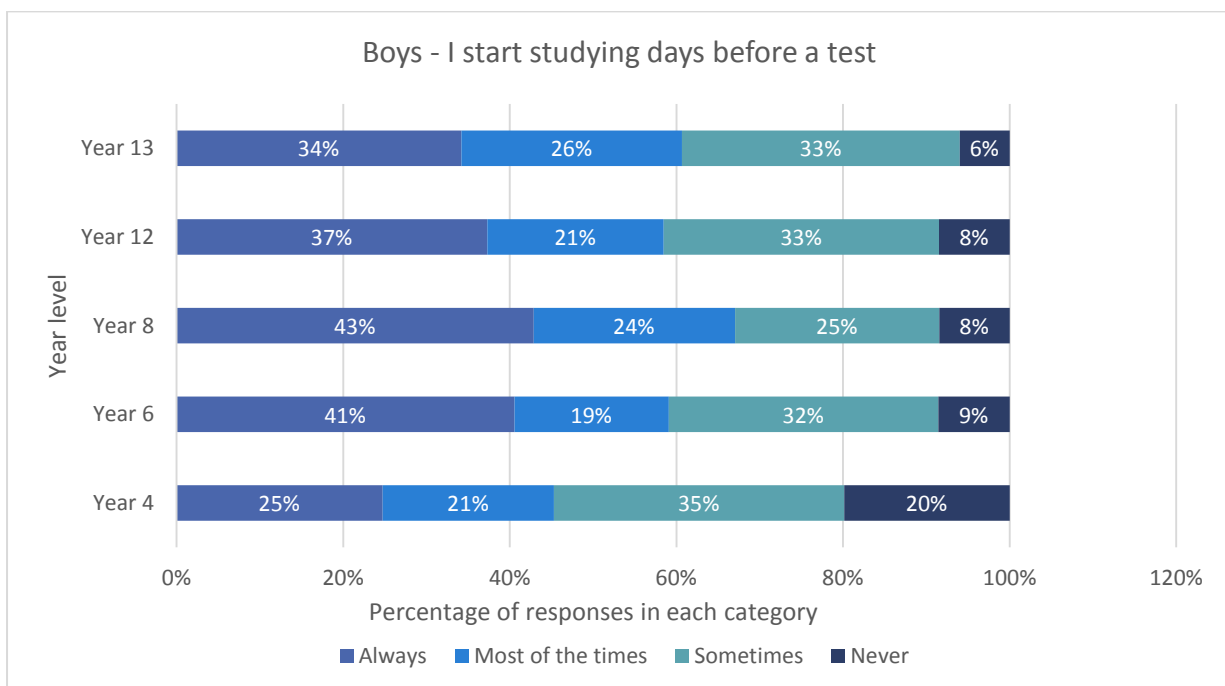


Figure 13 indicates that at least two-thirds of high achieving girls study ahead of a test most or all of the time. Figure 14 indicates a lower proportion of low-achieving boys study ahead of a test most or all of the time. However, with the exception of Year 4, more than half of low-achieving boys study ahead of a test most or all of the time, at all levels.

Figure 14. Low-achieving boys - studying ahead of a test



#### 4.1.6 Dedicating time for studies

Figure 15. High achieving girls - dedicating for studies

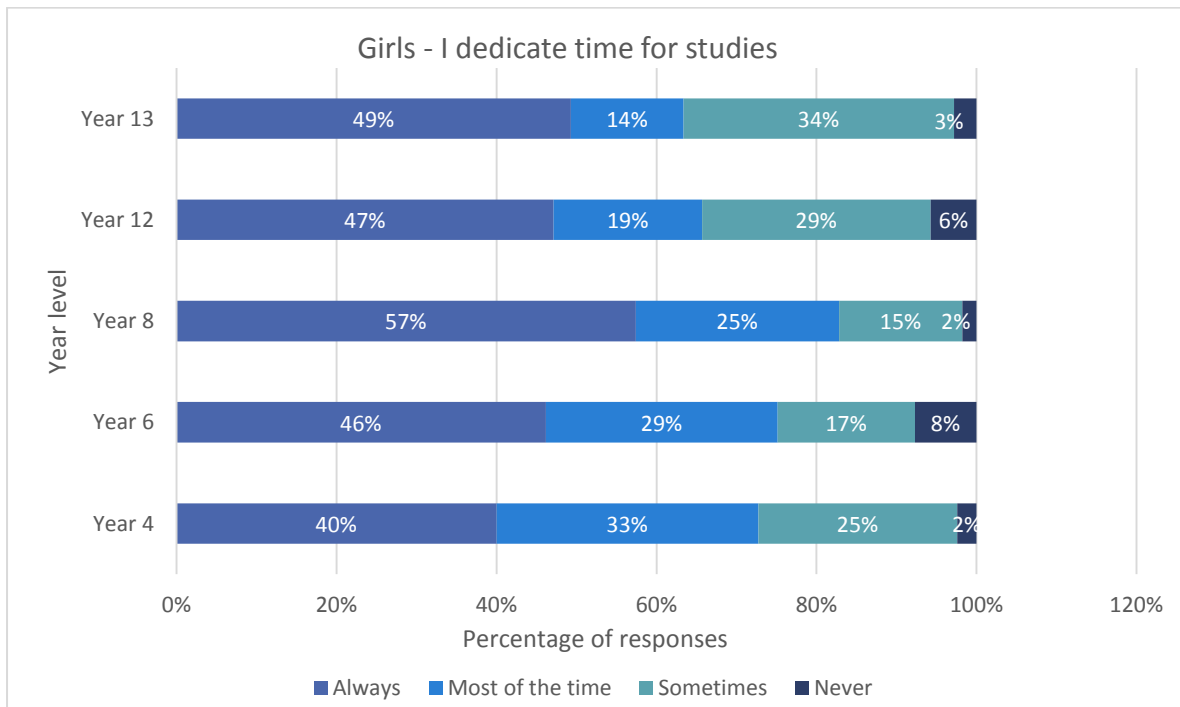
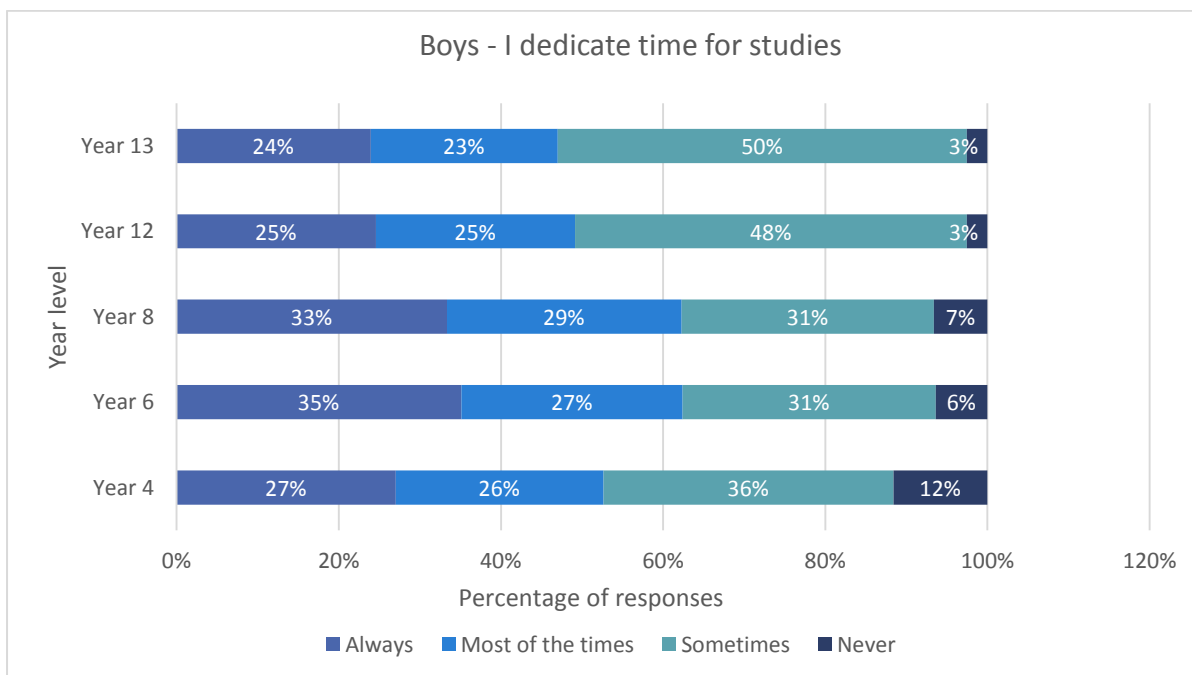


Figure 15 shows that between 63-82% of high-achieving girls set aside time to study all or most of the time. A higher proportion of high-achieving girls in primary school report setting aside time to study all or most of the time compared to their counterparts in secondary school. Interestingly, as shown in Figure 16, around half of all low-achieving boys report dedicating time to study most or all of the time, ranging from 47% in Year 13 to 62% in Year 8.

Figure 16. Low-achieving boys - dedicating time for studies



#### 4.1.7 More time on chores than studying

Figure 17. High-achieving girls - spending more time on chores than studying

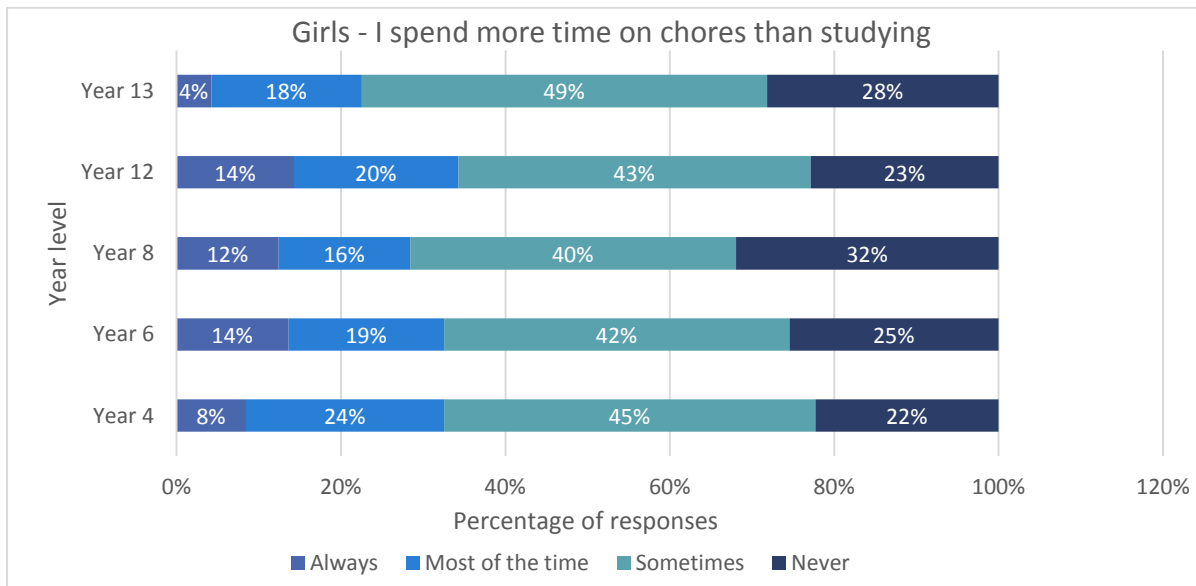
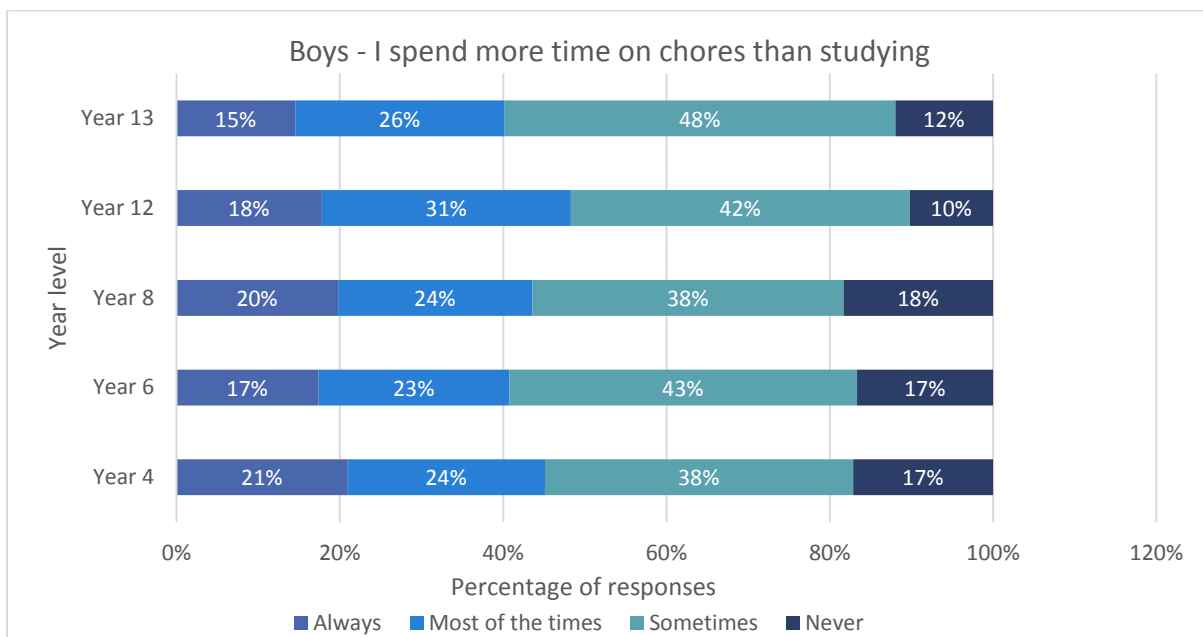


Figure 17 indicates that more than two thirds of high achieving girls report never or only sometimes spending more time on chores compared to studying. Significantly, at least 22% of high achieving girls report spending more time on chores than studying all or most of the time. In other words, at least one in every five high-achieving girls in Year 13, at least one in every four girls in Year 8, and at least one in every three girls in Years 4, 6, and 12 do chores more than studying, most or all of the time.

Figure 18 indicates that compared to high-achieving girls, higher proportions of low-achieving boys at all levels spend more time on chores than studying. However, it is important to note that more than half of low-achieving boys report never or only sometimes spending more time on chores rather than studying.

Figure 18. Low-achieving boys - spending more time on chores than studying





#### 4.1.8 Getting a good night's sleep before a test

Figure 19. High-achieving girls - getting a good night's sleep before a test

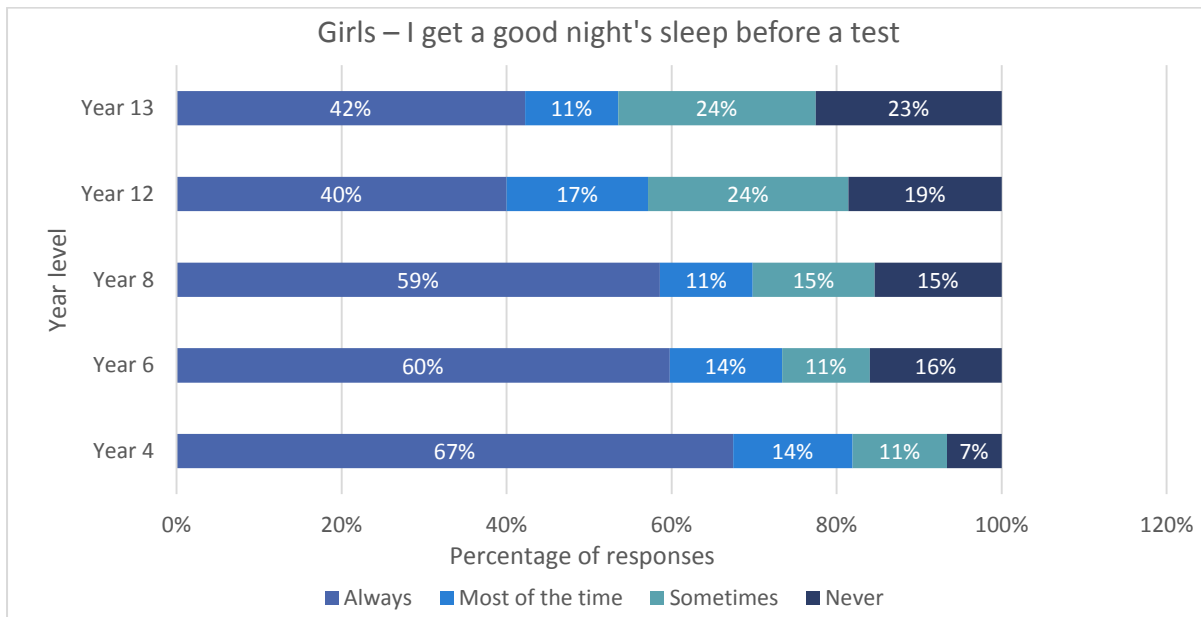
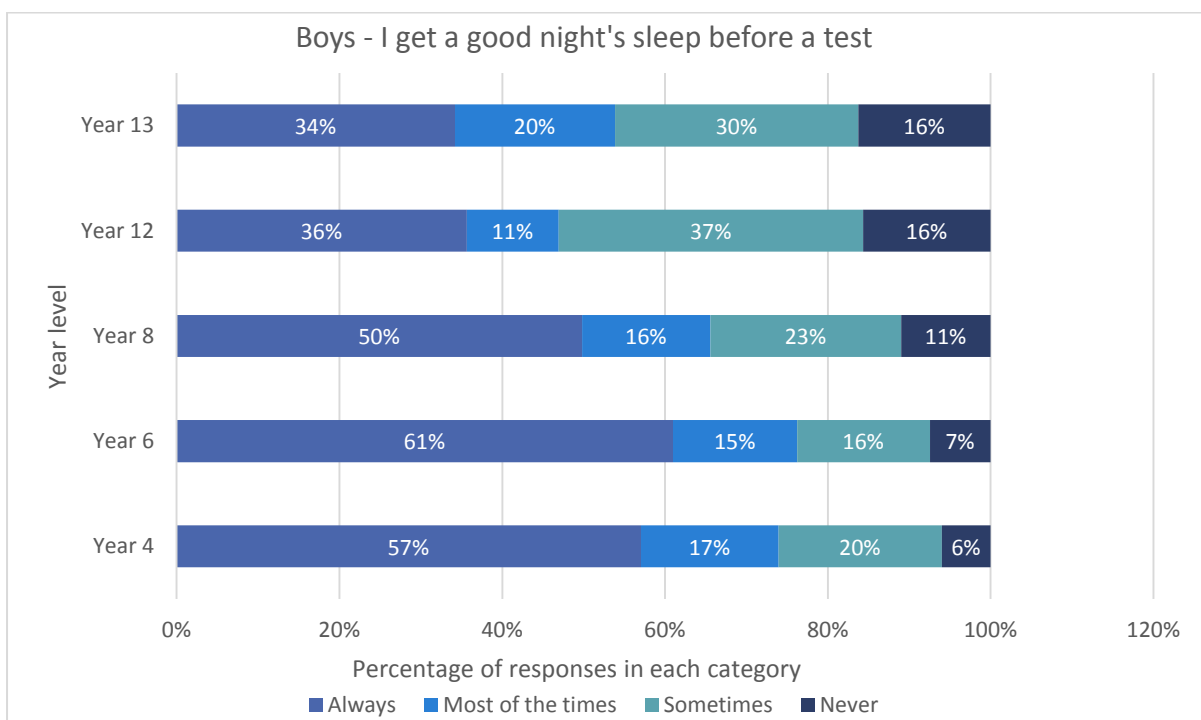


Figure 19 shows that the majority of high-achieving girls in all levels get a good night's sleep before a test most or all of the time. The highest proportions of high-achieving girls who sleep well before a test are in year 4, with the proportions declining as they get older.

Figure 20 shows that more than half of low-achieving boys get a good night's sleep before a test in all Year levels except Year 12. Nevertheless, higher proportions of high-achieving girls at all levels sleep well before a test compared to low-achieving boys at all levels.

Figure 20. Low-achieving boys - getting a good night's sleep before a test



## 4.2 Perceptions and experiences of the home environment

### 4.2.1 A peaceful home to study

Figure 21. High achieving girls - a peaceful home to study

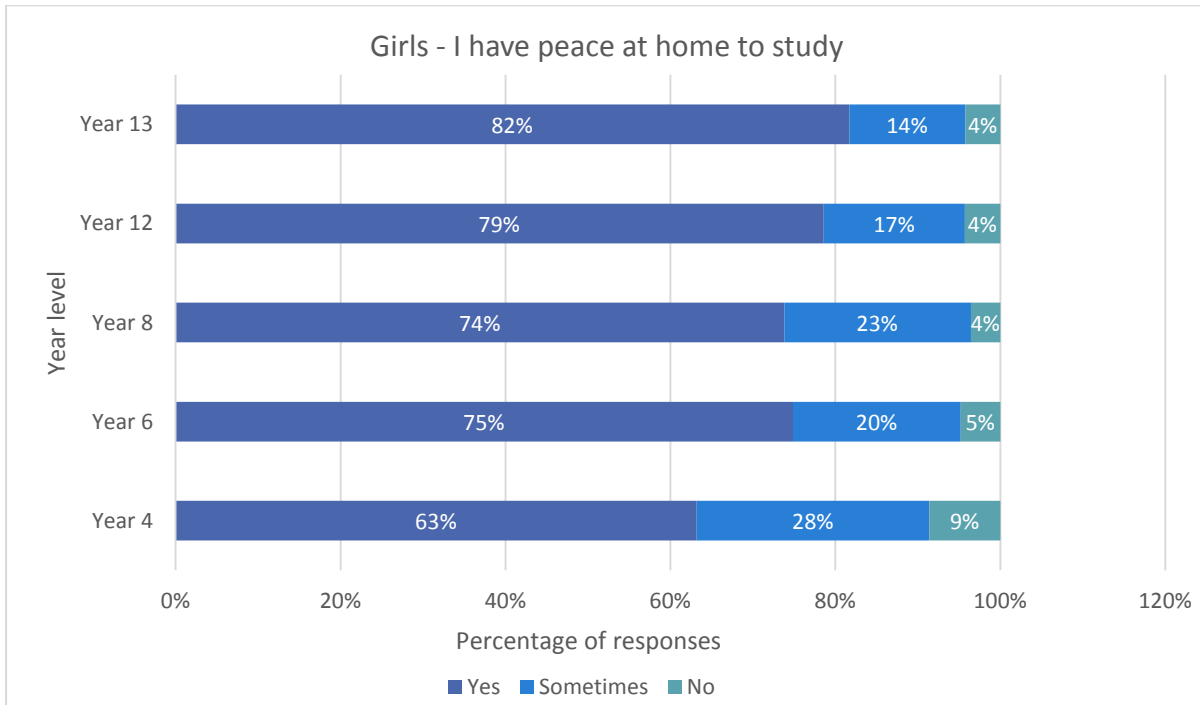
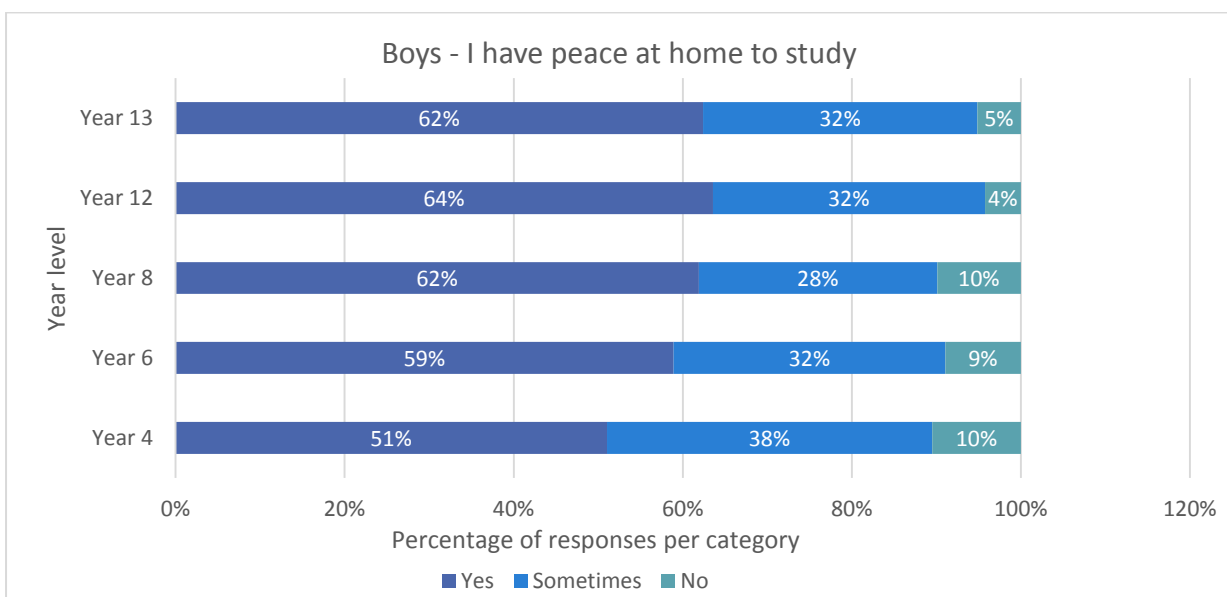


Figure 21 shows that 63% to 82% of high achieving girls report having peaceful surroundings at home to study. Figure 22 shows much lower proportions of low achieving boys report the same thing, however the proportion of boys that have a peaceful home to study is still in the majority. About the same proportions of high-achieving girls and low-achieving boys report not having peaceful surroundings for studying at home, which is between 4% to 10% across the various levels.

Figure 22. Low-achieving boys - a peaceful home to study



#### 4.2.2 Parents always know progress at school

Figure 23. High achieving girls - parents knowing progress at school

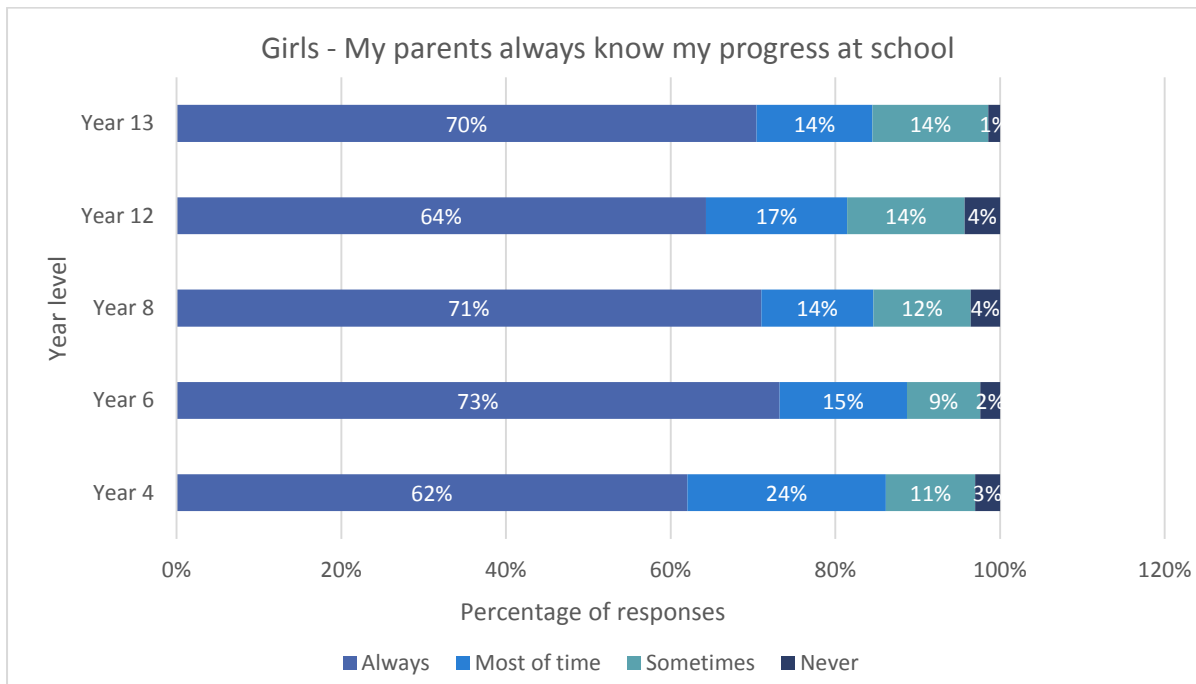
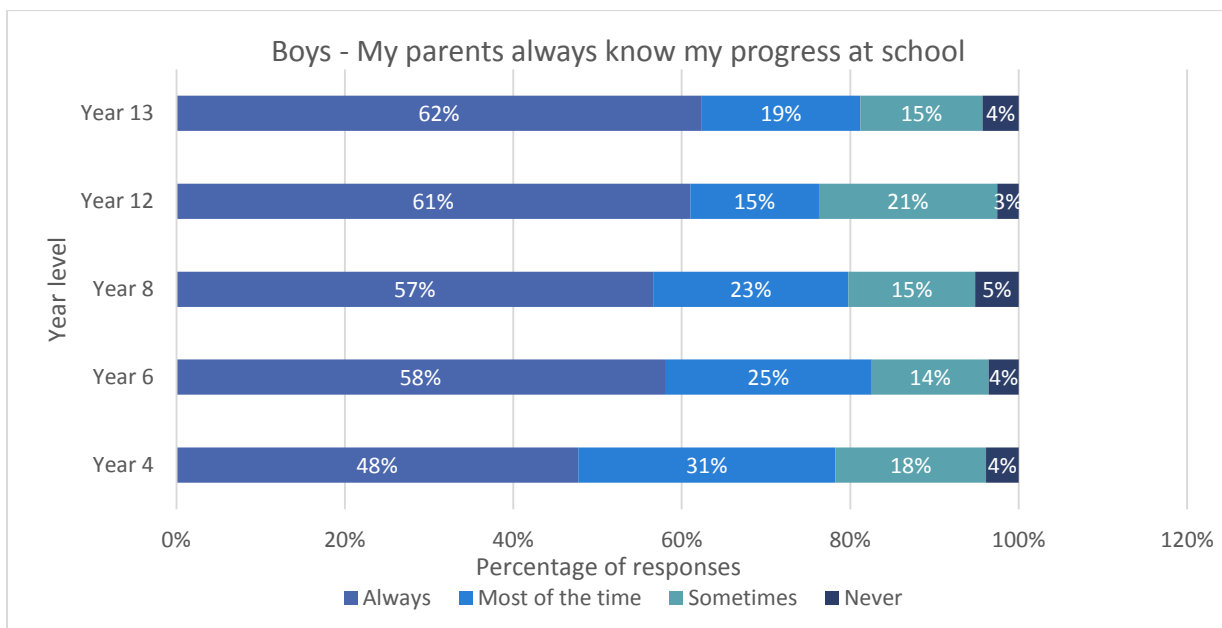


Figure 23 shows that 81% to 90% of high achieving girls say their parents always know their progress at school most or all of the time.

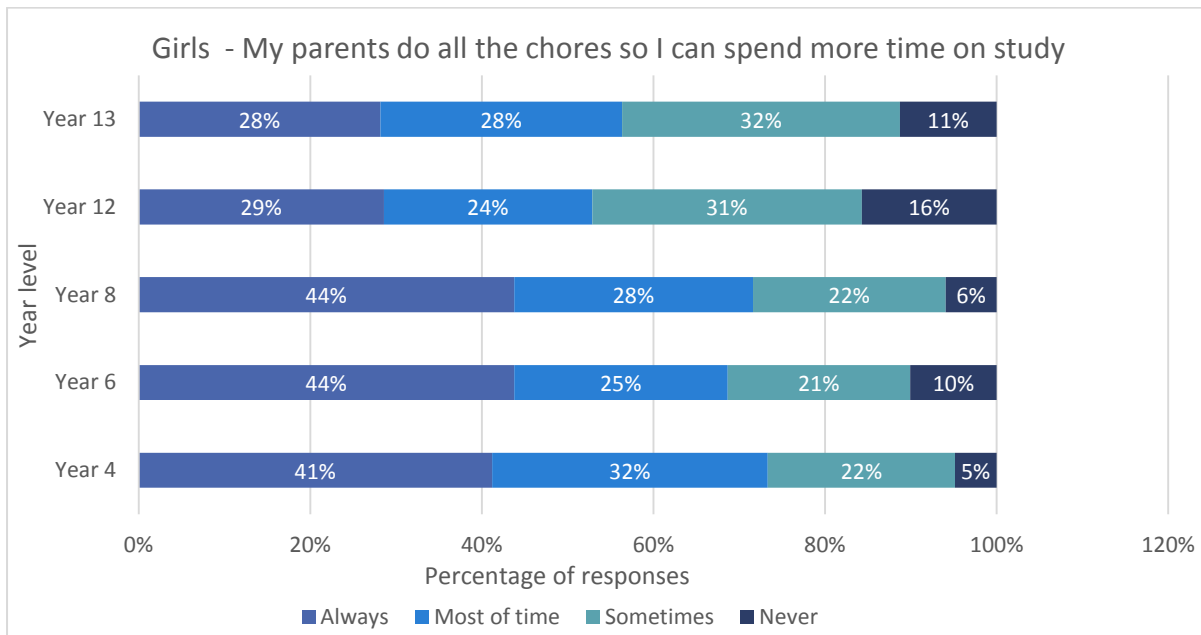
In comparison as shown in Figure 24, 76% to 81% of low achieving boys reported the same thing. On average across all levels however, 20.6% of low achieving boys responded that their parents never or only sometimes know their progress at school, compared to 12.8% of high-achieving girls.

Figure 24. Low achieving boys - parents know progress at school



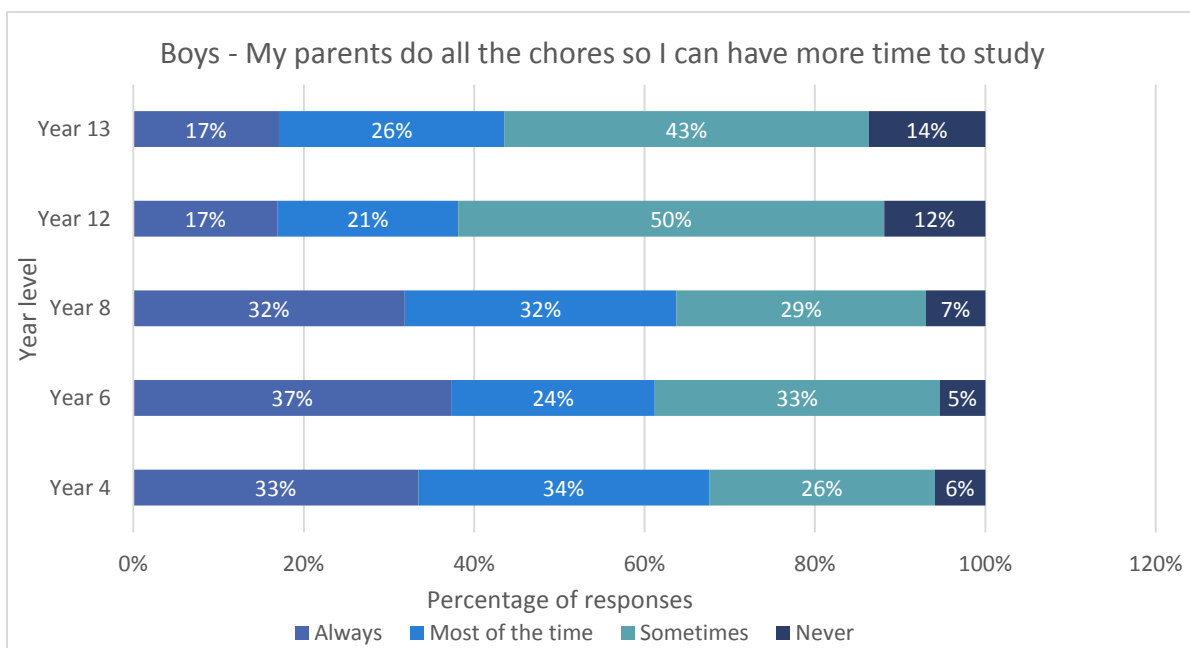
### 4.2.3 Parents do chores, so I have more time to study

Figure 25. High achieving girls - parents do chores so I have more time to study



As shown in Figure 25, 53% to 73% of high achieving girls responded that their parents do the chores so they can have more time to study, all or most of the time. The proportions are higher for the high achieving girls in primary school compared to their secondary school counterparts. In comparison, Figure 26 indicates that 38% to 67% of boys report that their parents do the chores so they have more time to study. Taking a closer look, the proportions are also higher for the boys in primary school compared to their counterparts in secondary school. There is a significant difference (at least 10%) between the proportions of high-achieving girls and low-achieving boys whose parents always do chores leaving them with more time to study, in Year 8 and in secondary school.

Figure 26. Low achieving boys - parents do chores so I have more to study



#### 4.2.4 There are many reading books and textbooks at home

Figure 27. High achieving girls - many reading books and textbooks at home

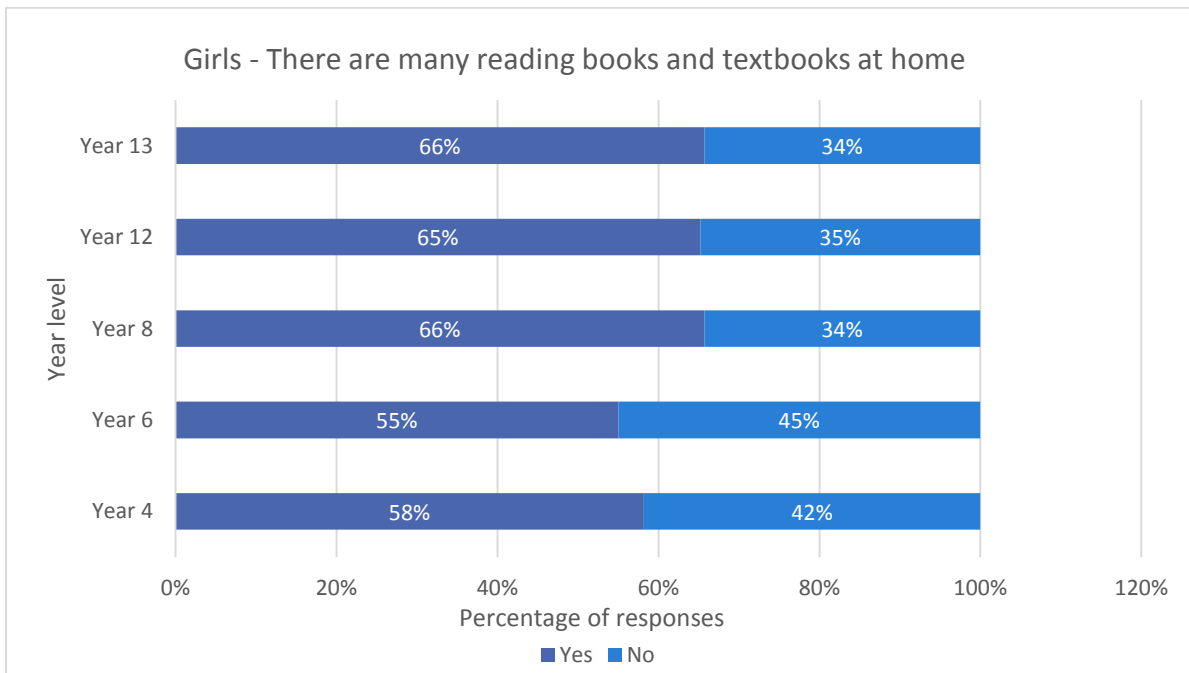
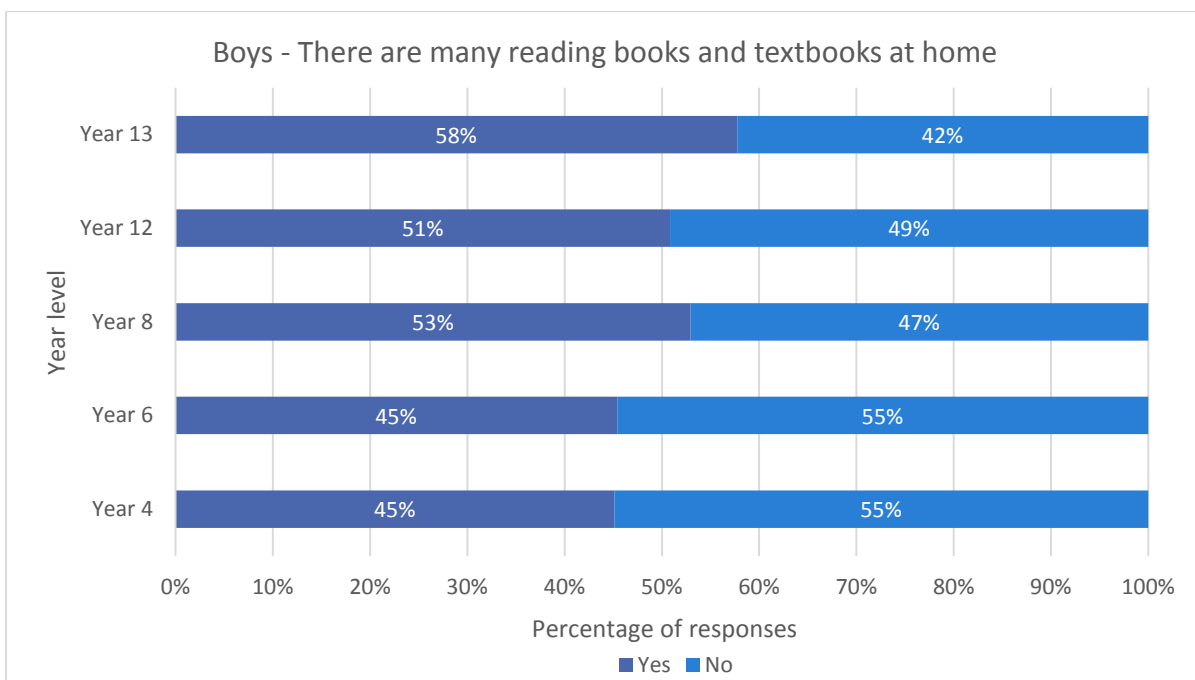


Figure 27 indicates that 55% to 66% of high achieving girls report that there are many reading books and textbooks at home. In comparison, Figure 28 shows that 45% to 58% of low achieving boys had the same response. Figure 28 also shows that just under half of primary school, and over half of secondary school, male respondents indicate they do have many reading books and textbooks at home. At all year levels except Year 13, there is at least a 10% difference between the proportion of high achieving girls and low achieving boys who responded yes to this question.

Figure 28. Low achieving boys - many reading books and textbooks at home



#### 4.2.5 Parents help with reading at home

Figure 29. High achieving girls - parents help with reading at home

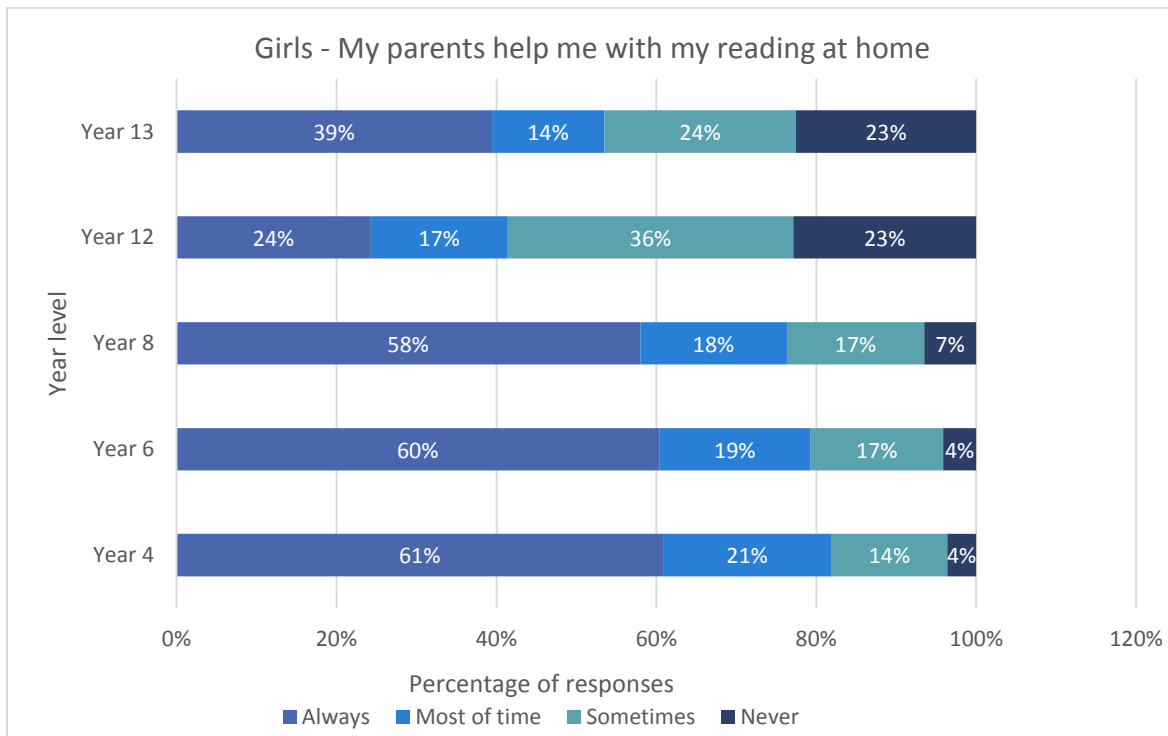
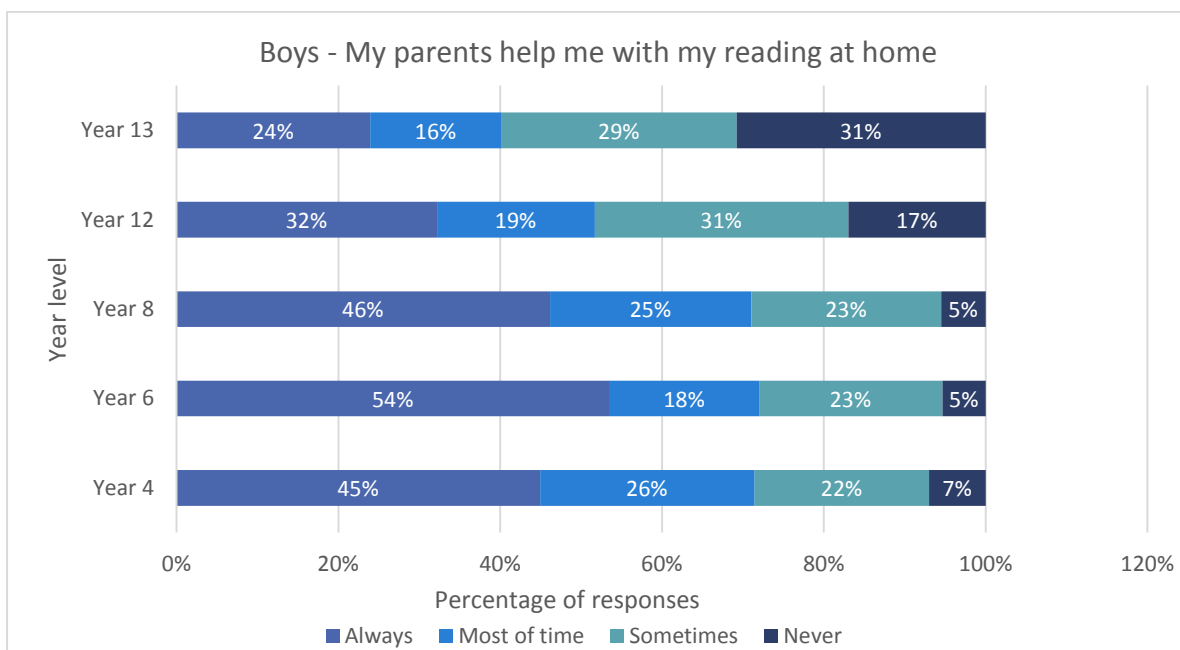


Figure 29 shows that parents helped with reading at home most or all of the time for more than 75% of high achieving girls in primary school. This was also the case for 41% of Year 12 and 53% of Year 13 high achieving girls. Figure 30 shows that parents also helped with reading at home most or all of the time, for 71% of low achieving boys in primary school. This was also the case for 51% of Year 12 and 40% of Year 13 low-achieving boys.

Figure 30. Low-achieving boys - parents help with reading at home



#### 4.2.6 Parents always discuss my progress with my teacher

Figure 31. High-achieving girls - parents always discuss progress with the teacher

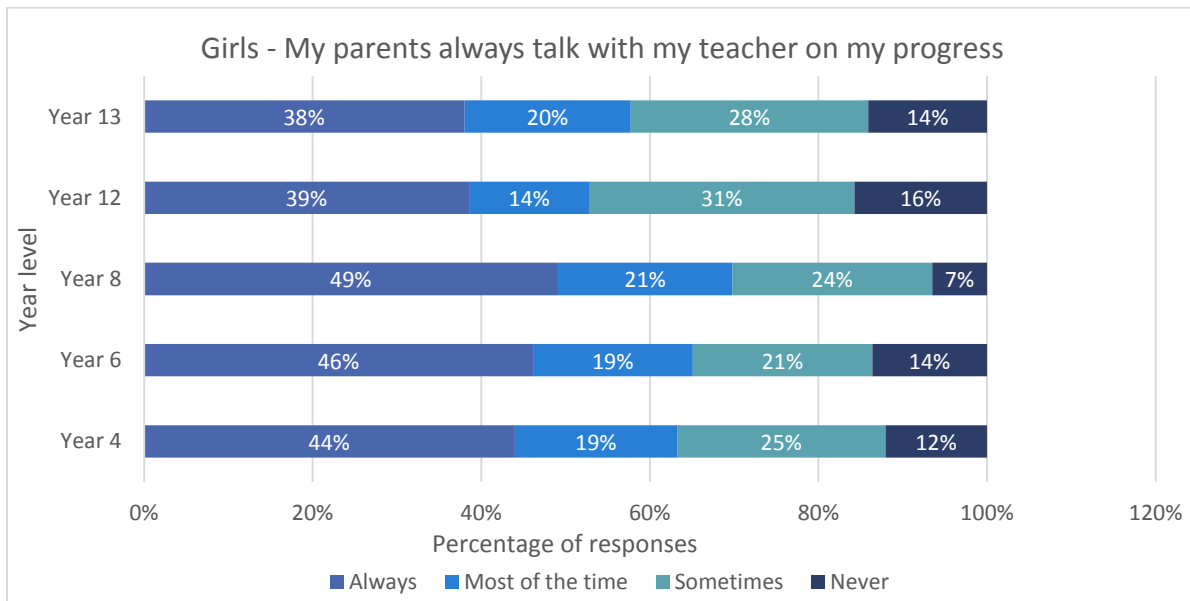
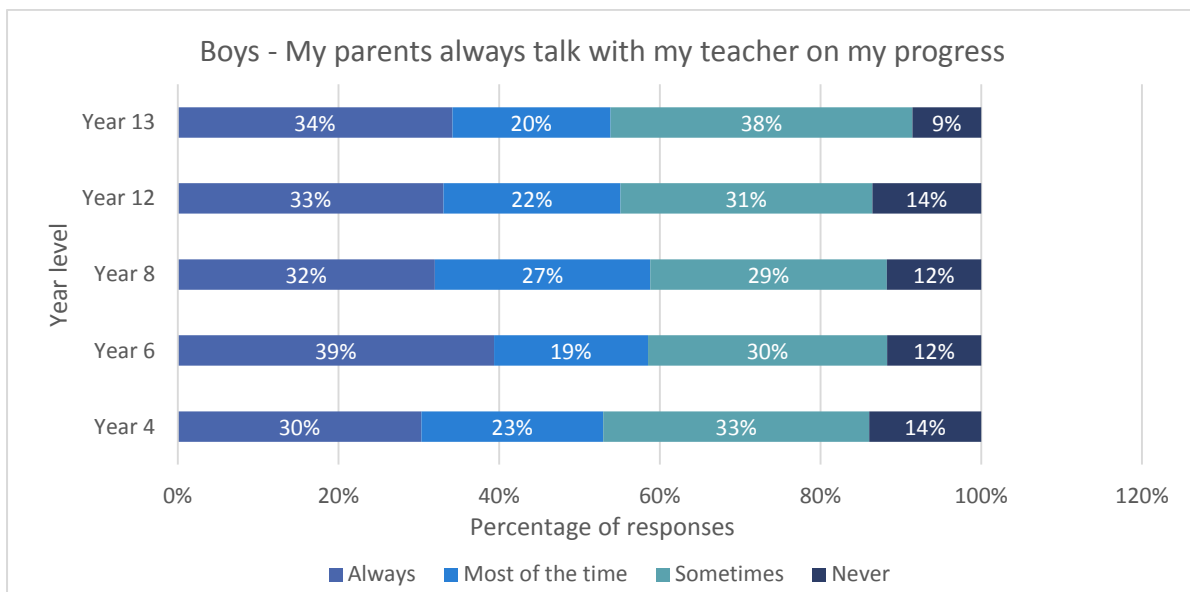


Figure 31 indicates that 53% to 70% of high-achieving girls report their parents as always, or most of the time, communicating with their teacher regarding their progress. The proportion is highest for high-achieving girls in Year 8 and lowest for high-achieving girls in Year 12. Surprisingly, more than 10% of high-achieving girls at all levels, except Year 8 responded that their parents never talk with their teacher about their progress.

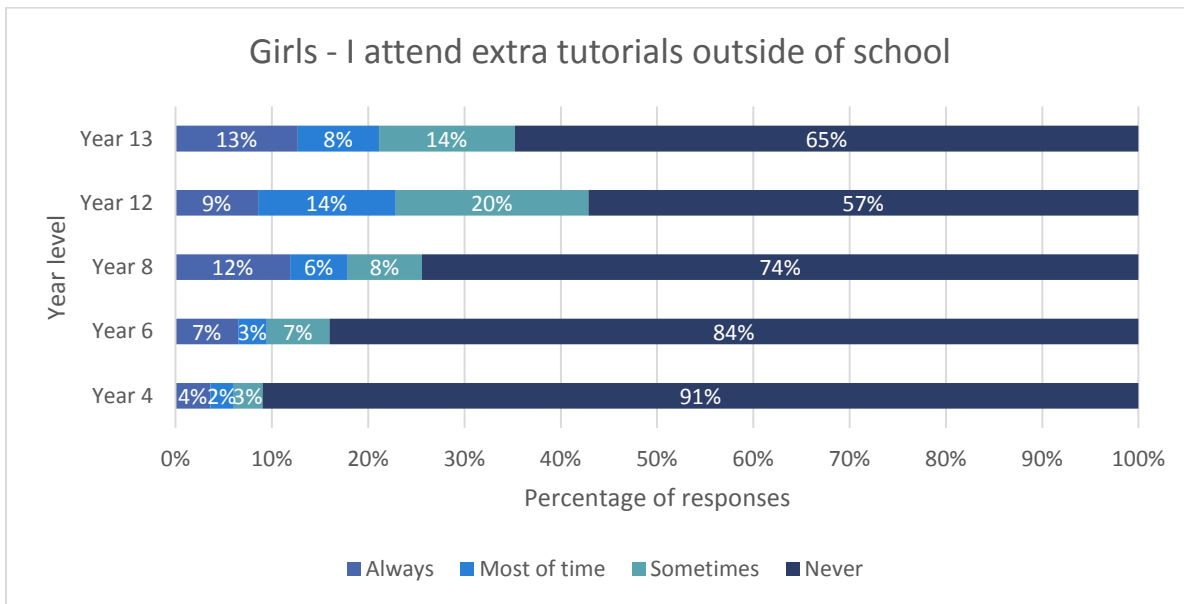
Figure 32 shows that between 53% and 59%, or more than half, of low-achieving boys in all levels, report their parents communicating with their teachers regarding their progress all or most of the time. More than 10% at every year level except Year 13 responded that their teachers never talk with their teacher about their progress.

Figure 32. Low-achieving boys - parents always discuss progress with the teacher



#### 4.2.7 I attend extra tutorials outside of school

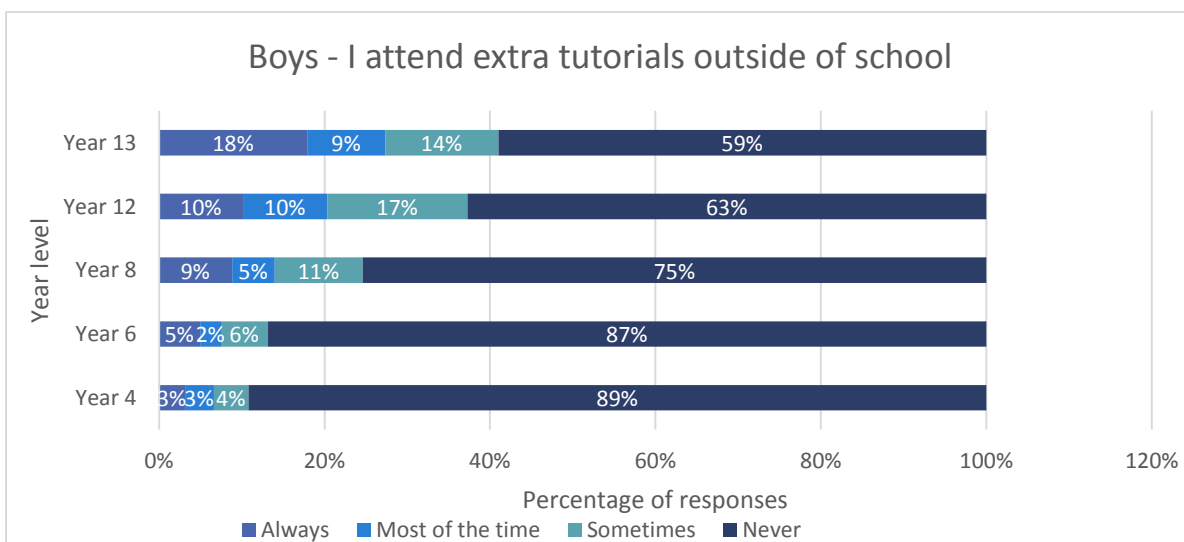
Figure 33. High achieving girls - attends extra tutorials outside of school



As shown in Figure 33, a higher proportion of high achieving girls in secondary school have attended extra tutorials at least sometimes, compared to their counterparts in primary school. 43% of Year 12 girls and 35% of Year 13 girls have attended an extra tutorial outside of school.

Figure 34 below indicates that 41% of low achieving boys in Year 13 and 37% in Year 12 have attended extra tutorials outside of school. The comparison between the two figures indicates that a higher proportion of high achieving girls in Year 13 and Year 4 have never attended extra tutorials outside of school compared to low achieving boys. The opposite holds true for Years 6, 8, and 12.

Figure 34. Low achieving boys - attends extra tutorials outside of school





#### 4.2.8 I cannot communicate with my parents

Figure 35. High achieving girls - communication with parents

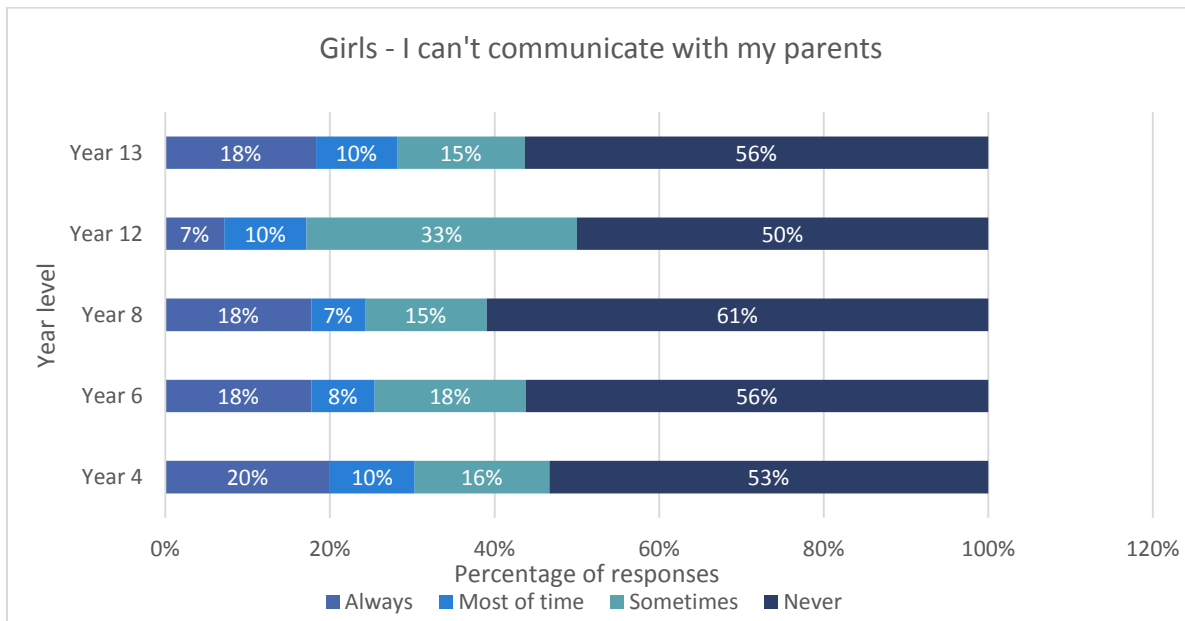
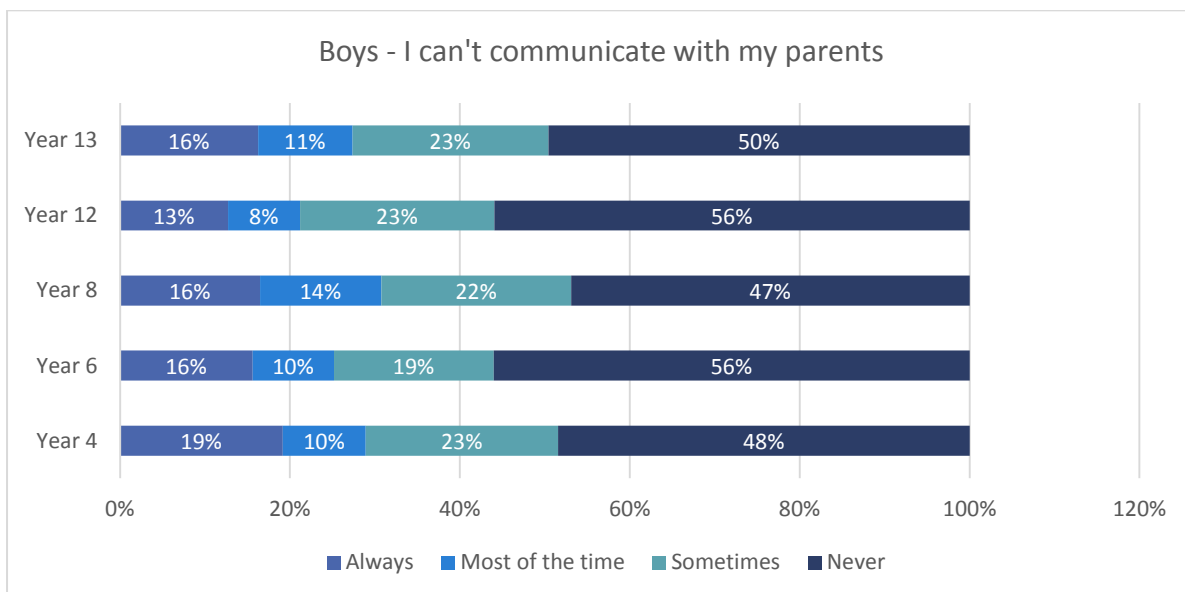


Figure 35 indicates that half of Year 12 high achieving girls and under half of their counterparts in other year levels were not able to communicate with their parents at some point (includes those who responded 'sometimes', 'most of the time' or 'always'). With the exception of those in Year 12, the majority of high-achieving girls, however, responded that they had never experienced this.

As shown in Figure 36, between 44% to 53% of all low-achieving boys had experienced not being able to communicate with their parents at some point (includes those who responded 'sometimes', 'most of the time' or 'always'). Conversely, the proportion of low-achieving boys who had never experienced this ranges from just under half at 47% for those in Year 8 and over half at 56% for those in Year 6 and Year 12.

Figure 36. Low-achieving boys - communication with parents



#### 4.2.9 I watch tv/video games at home

Figure 37. High achieving girls - watching tv or video games at home

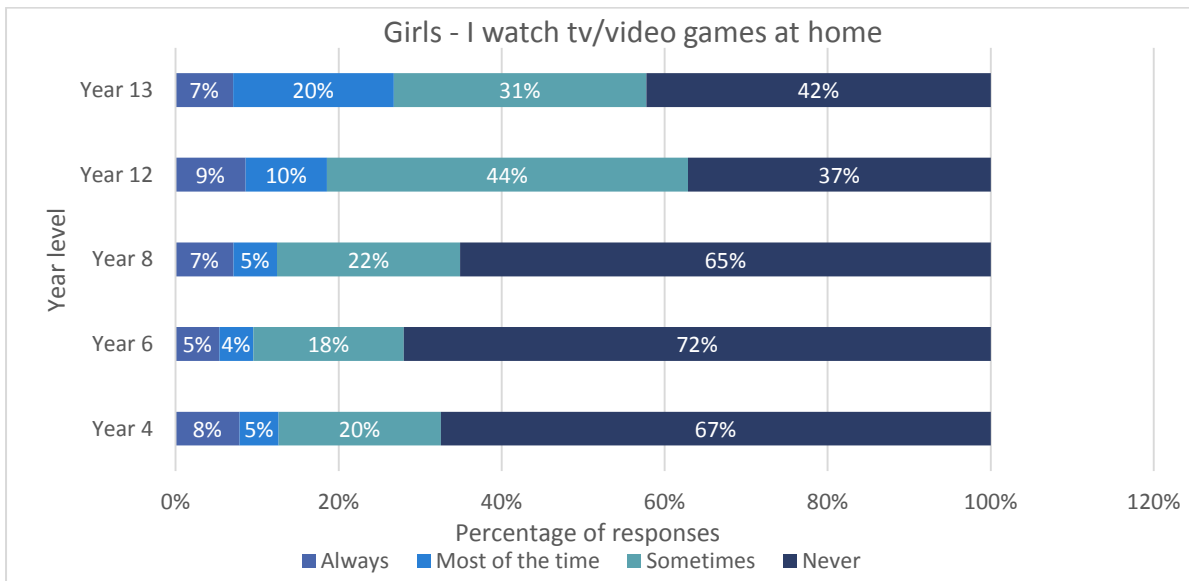
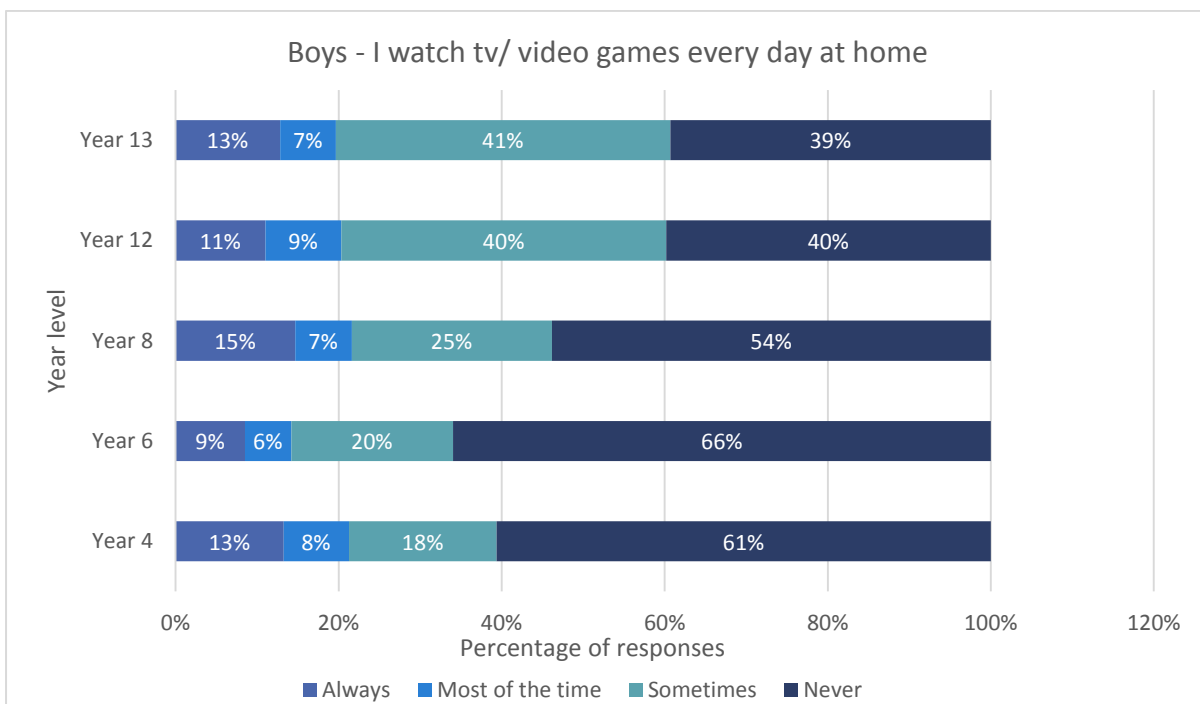


Figure 37 indicates that between 9% and 27% of high achieving girls watch tv or play video games at home all or most of the time, with the highest percentage of 27% in Year 13. At least two out of every three high achieving girls in primary school never watch tv or play video games at home, compared to a lower proportion in secondary school.

Figure 38 shows that between 15% to 22% of low achieving boys watch tv or play video games all or most of the time at home. The majority of low achieving boys however, never or only sometimes watch tv or play video games at home.

Figure 38. Low achieving boys - watching tv or video games at home



## 4.3 Perceptions and experiences of the school environment

### 4.3.1 My teacher is caring

Figure 39. High-achieving girls - my teacher is caring

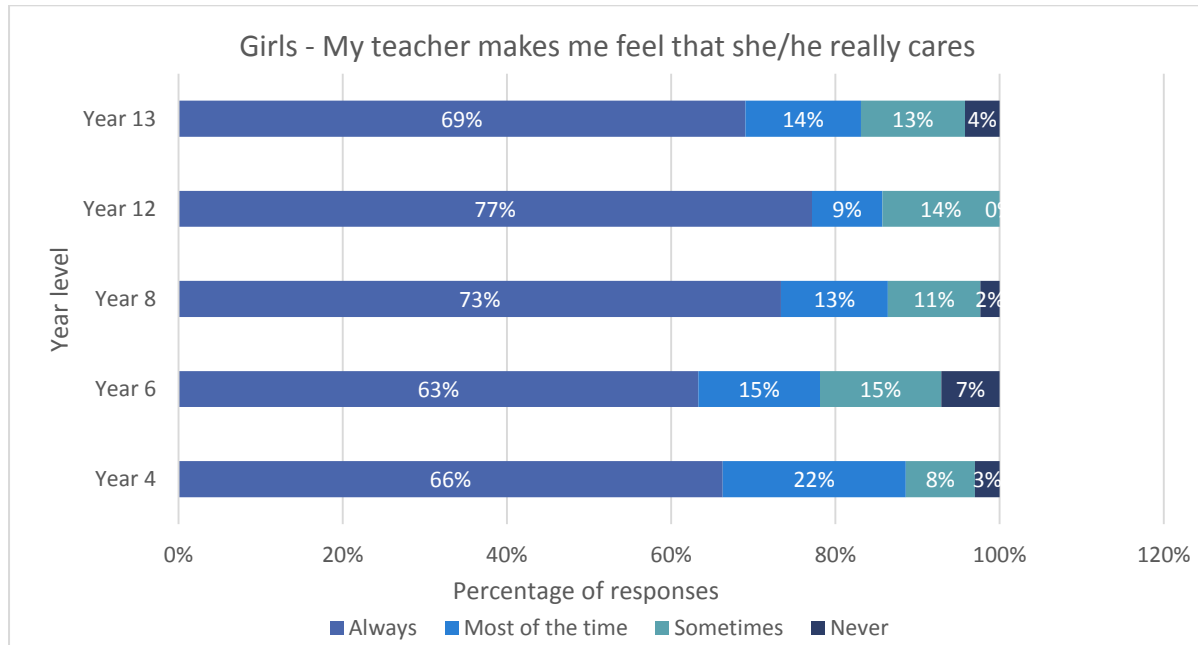
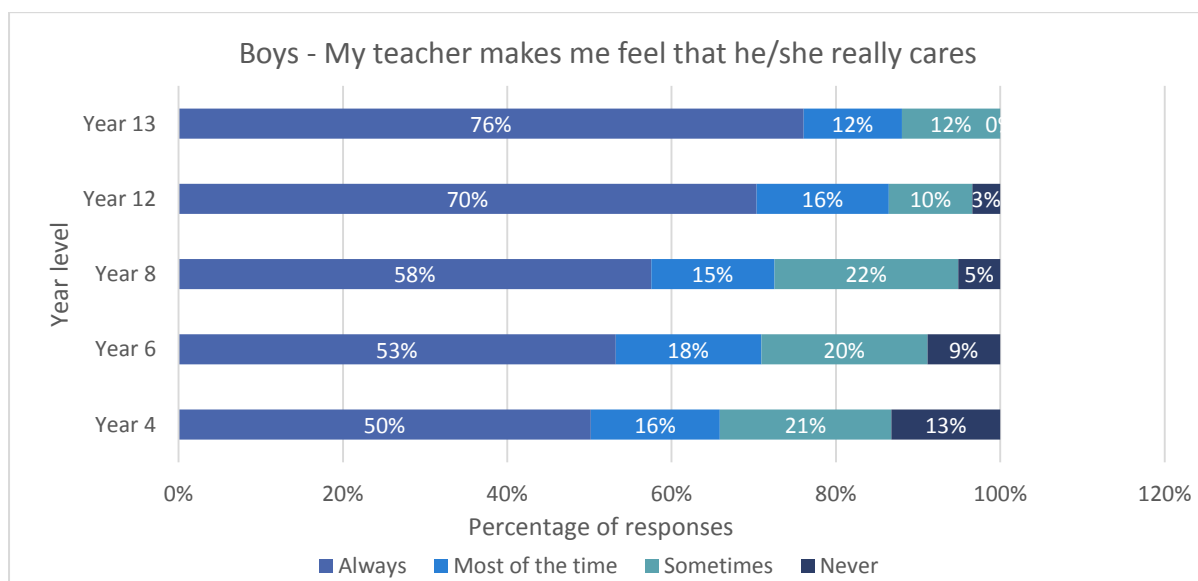


Figure 39 indicates that quite high proportions of high achieving girls at every level see their teachers as caring most or all of the time. The proportions ranged from 78% of high achieving girls in Year 6, to 88% in Year 4.

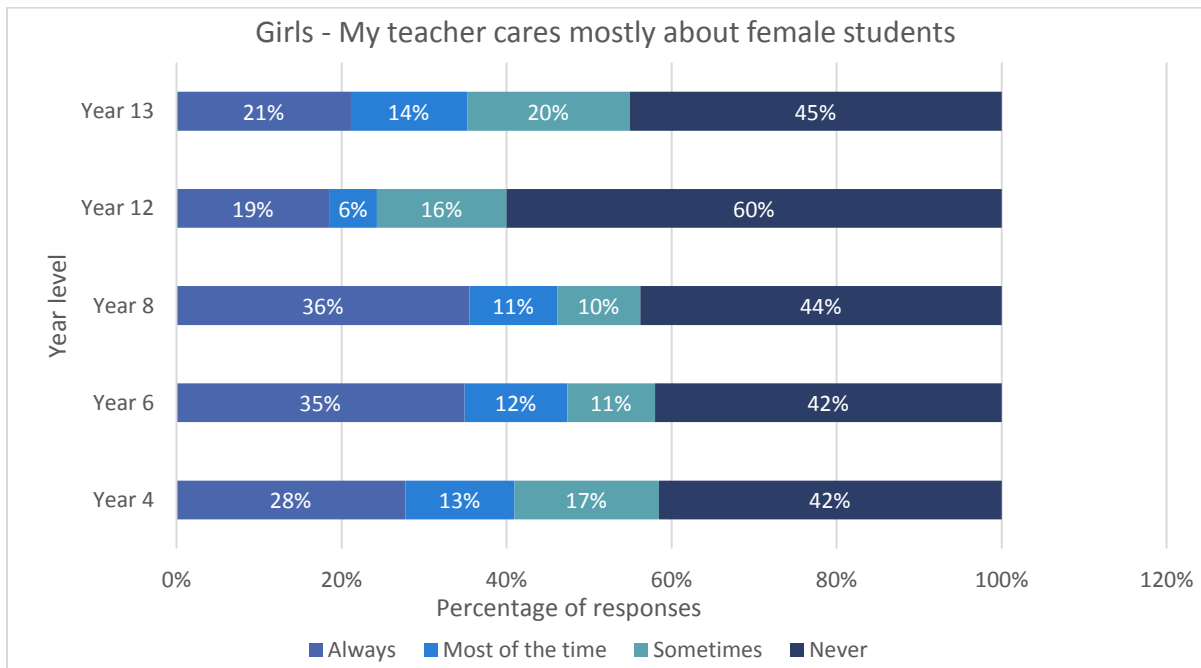
Figure 40 shows that the proportions of low achieving boys who reported their teachers as being caring most or all of the time ranged from 66% in Year 4, to 88% in Year 13. The proportion of low achieving boys who reported that their teacher 'never' made them feel like they care is much higher for those in primary school compared to the secondary school.

Figure 40. Low achieving boys - my teacher is caring



### 4.3.2 My teacher cares mores for female students

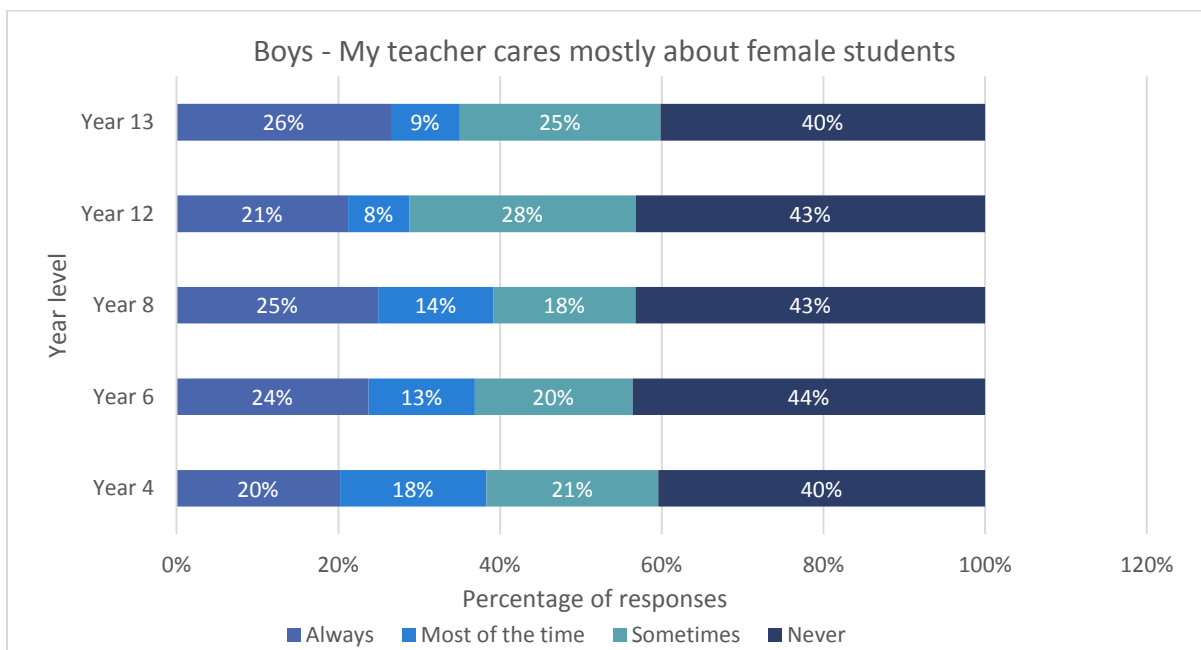
Figure 41. High achieving girls - my teacher cares mostly for female students



As shown in Figure 41, more than half of high achieving girls at all levels except Year 12 think that their teacher cares more for female students at least sometimes, with more than a quarter saying this happens most or all the time.

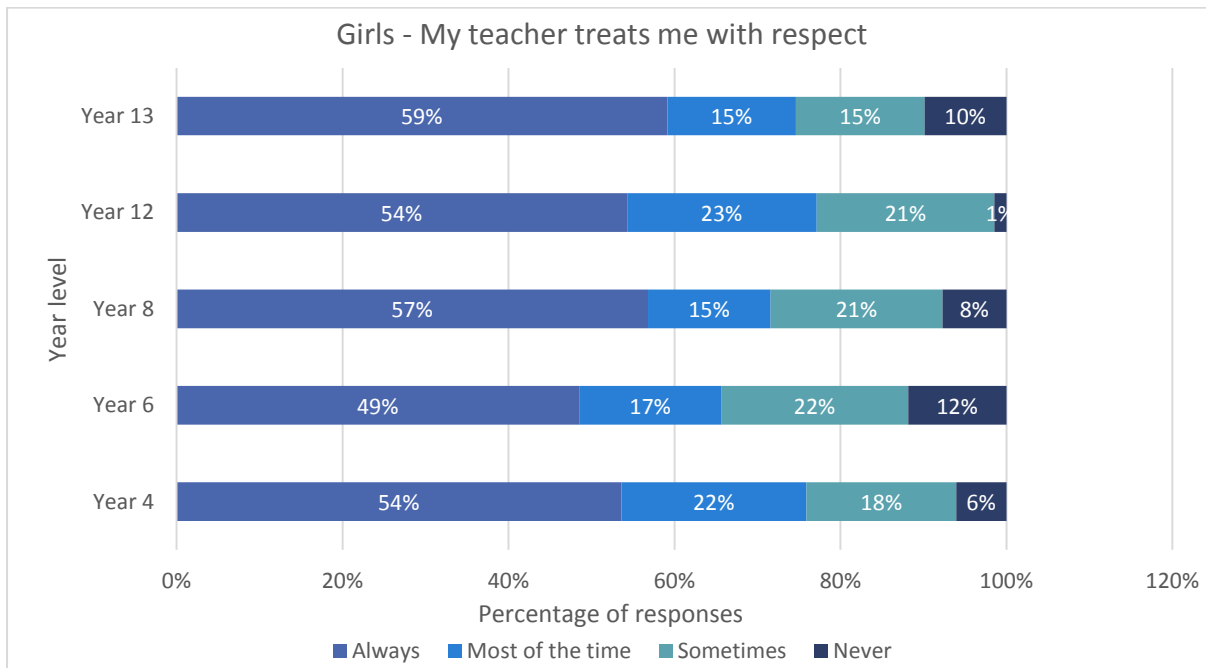
Figure 42 which reflects the perspective of low achieving boys shows at least 60% agreeing that their teacher cares more for female students at least sometimes (includes those who responded 'sometimes', 'most of the time' or 'always').

Figure 42. Low achieving boys - my teacher cares mostly for female students



### 4.3.3 My teacher treats me with respect

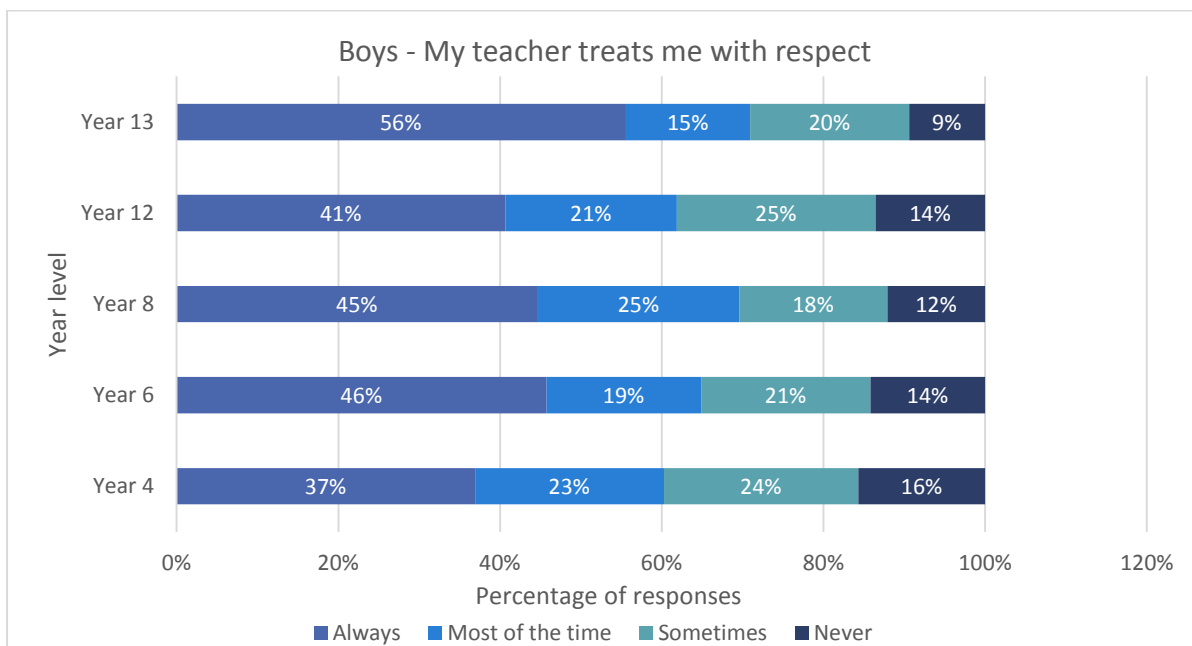
Figure 43. High achieving girls - my teacher treats me with respect



As shown in Figure 43, between 63% and 77% of high achieving girls say their teacher treats them with respect most or all of the time. Worryingly, 8% to 12% responded that they have never experienced this (Years 4, 6, 8 and 13).

In Figure 44, between 60% to 71% of low achieving boys also indicate their teachers treat them with respect most or all of the time. However, the proportion of boys who say their teachers never treat them with respect is still significant from 9% in Year 13 to 16% in Year 4.

Figure 44. Low achieving boys - my teacher treats me with respect



#### 4.3.4 My teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly

Figure 45. High achieving girls - teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly

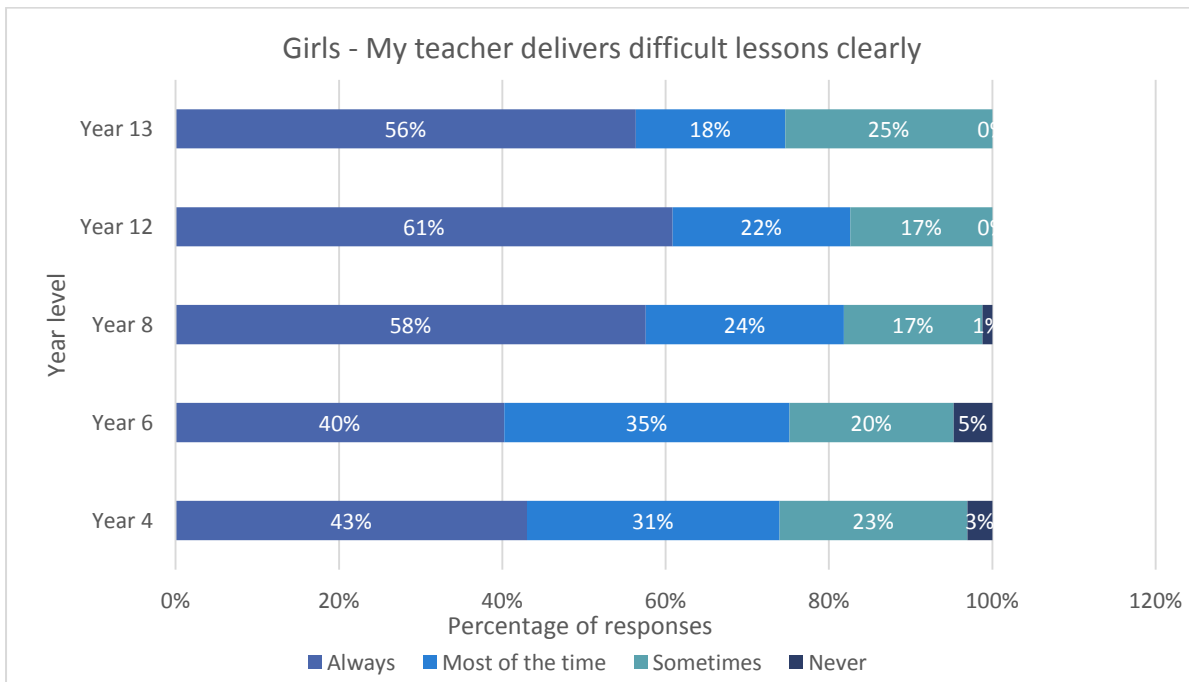
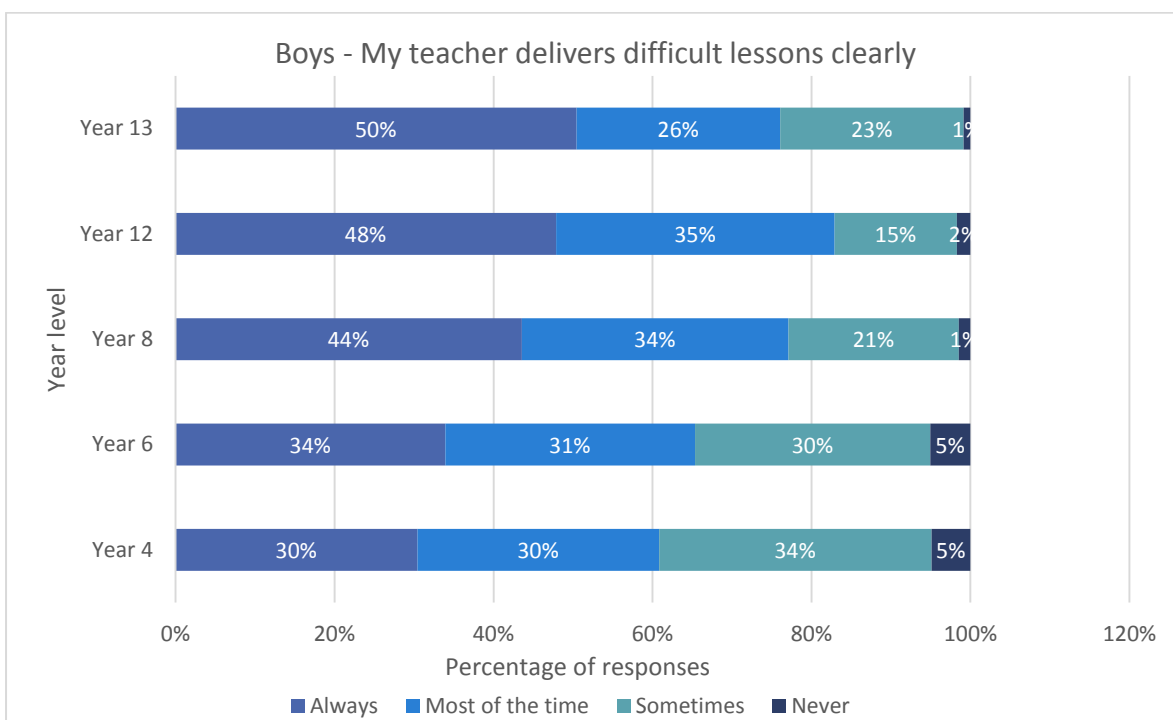


Figure 45 indicates from the responses of high achieving girls that for the vast majority (74% to 83%), their teachers deliver difficult lessons clearly most or all of the time.

As shown in Figure 46, between 60% and 83% of low achieving boys also report the same thing, agreeing that their teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly all or most of the time.

Figure 46. Low achieving boys - teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly



### 4.3.5 My teacher re-delivers difficult subjects in which I am at risk

Figure 47. High achieving girls - teacher redelivers subjects in which I am at risk

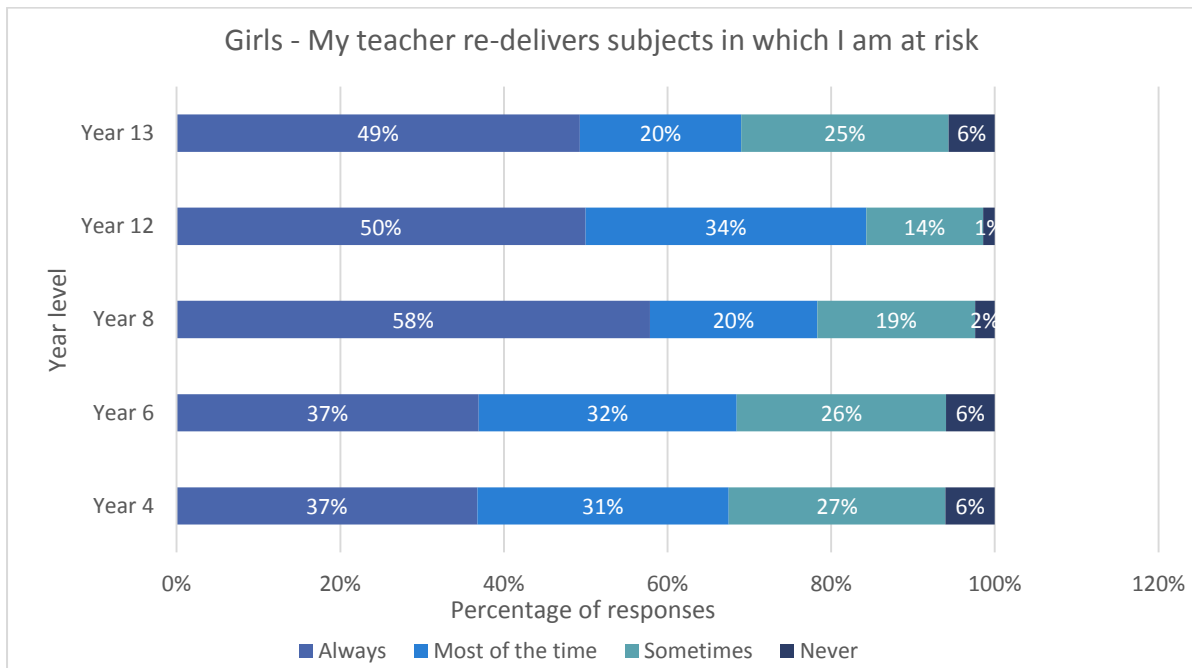
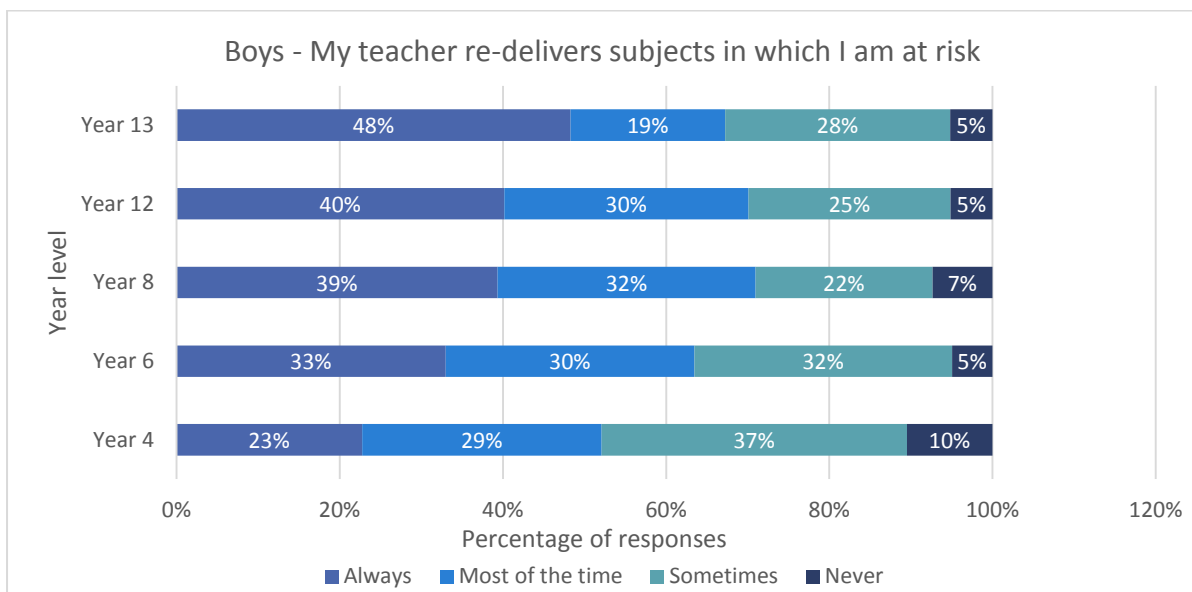


Figure 47 shows that the vast majority of high achieving girls report that their teacher re-delivers subjects in which they are at risk, all or most of the time. The proportions range from 68% in Year 4, to 84% in Year 12.

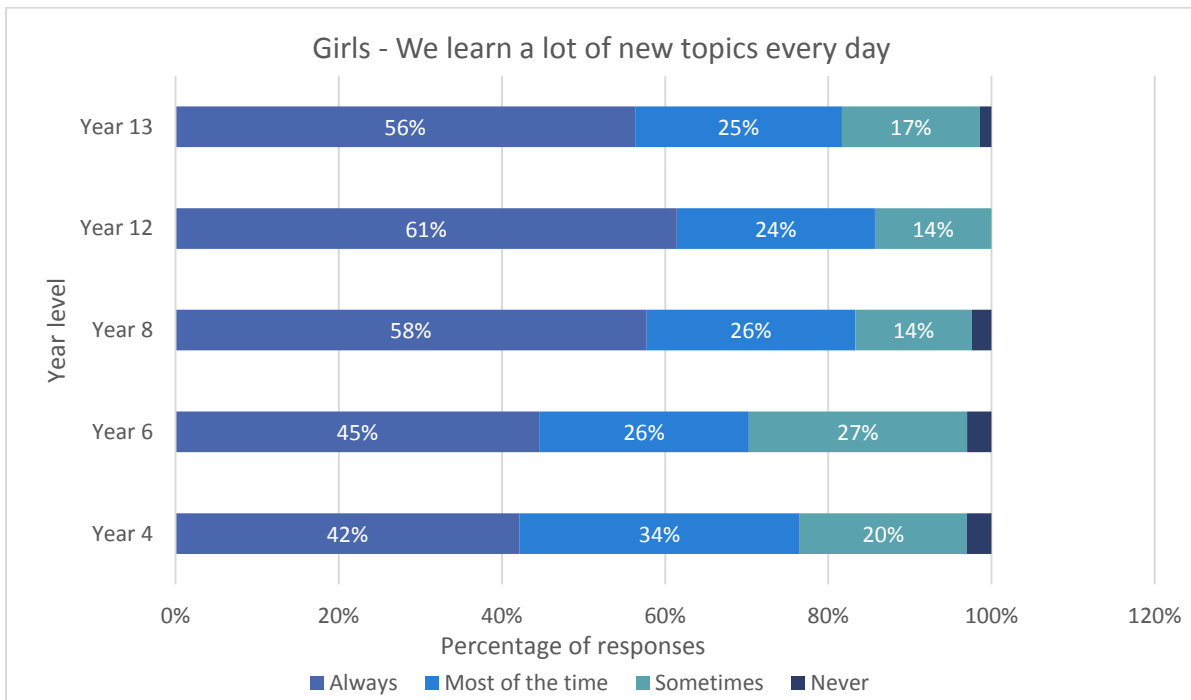
Figure 48 shows that lower percentages of low-achieving boys report the same experience all or most of the time, compared to high-achieving girls. However, the proportion of low-achieving boys who report their teacher re-delivers subjects in which they are at risk, all or most of the time, is still in the majority across all year levels. For example, the proportions of low-achieving boys who report this ranges from 52% in Year 4 to 71% in Year 8.

Figure 48. Low achieving boys - teacher redelivers subjects in which I am at risk



### 4.3.6 We learn a lot of new topics every day

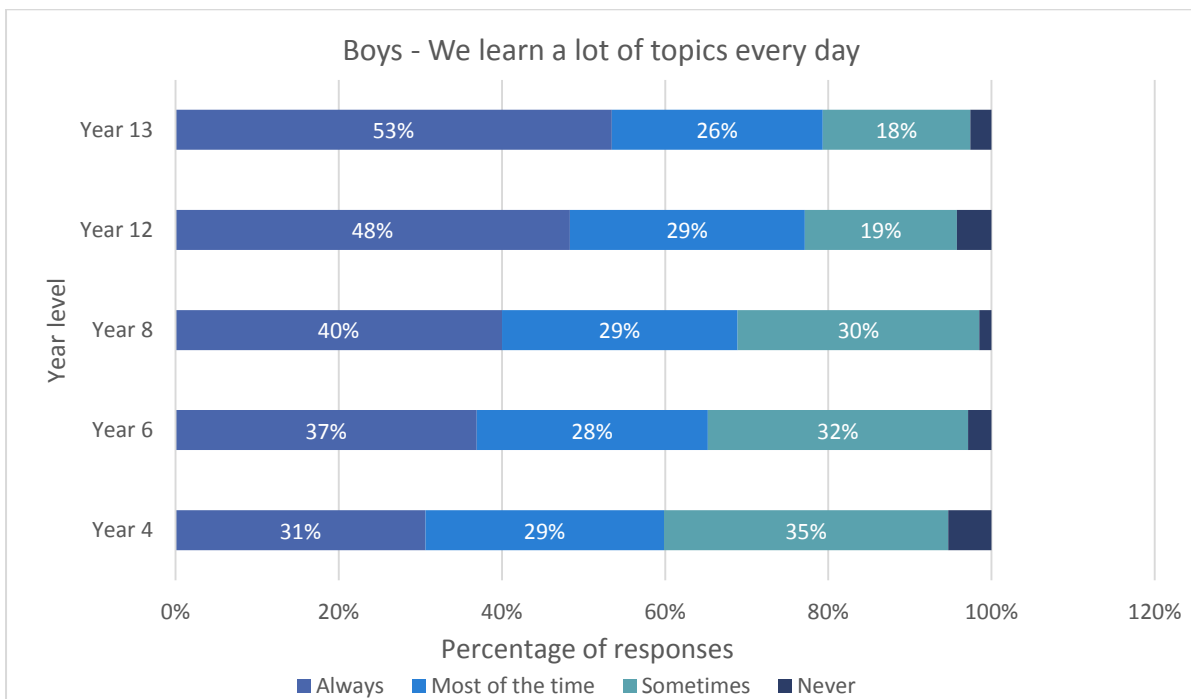
Figure 49. High achieving girls - learning new topics every day



As shown in Figure 49, 71% to 85% of high achieving girls say they learn a lot of new topics most or all the time.

The figures for low achieving boys are not too different. Figure 50 shows that 60% to 79% of low achieving boys say they learn new topics most or all the time.

Figure 50. Low achieving boys - learning new topics every day





### 4.3.7 We are free to share ideas in class

Figure 51. High achieving girls - free to share ideas in class

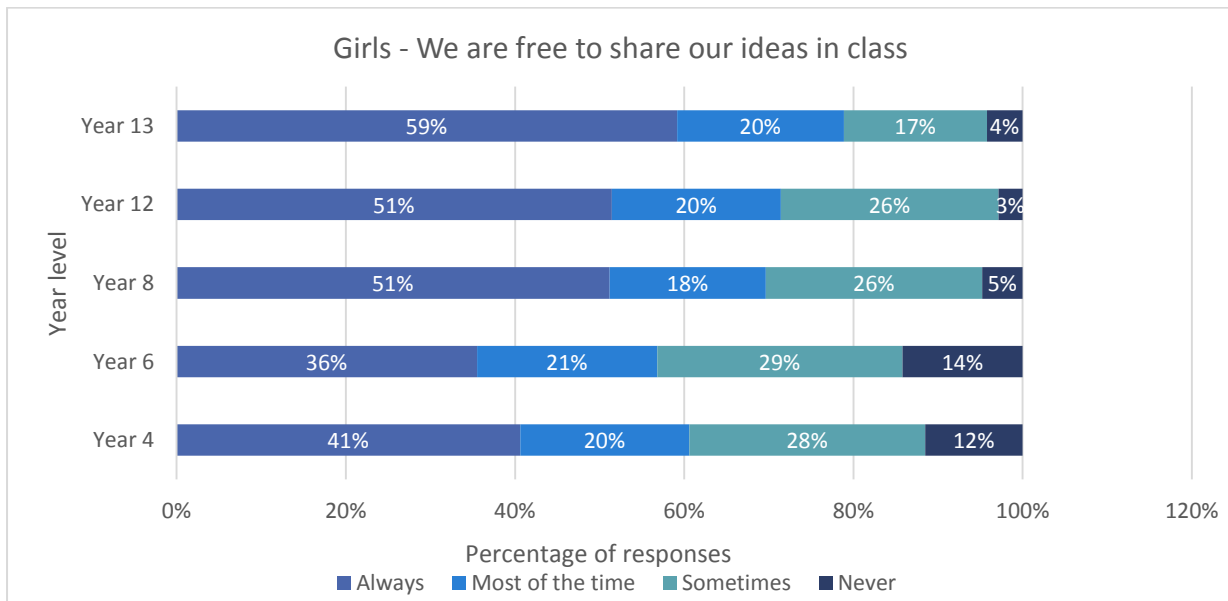
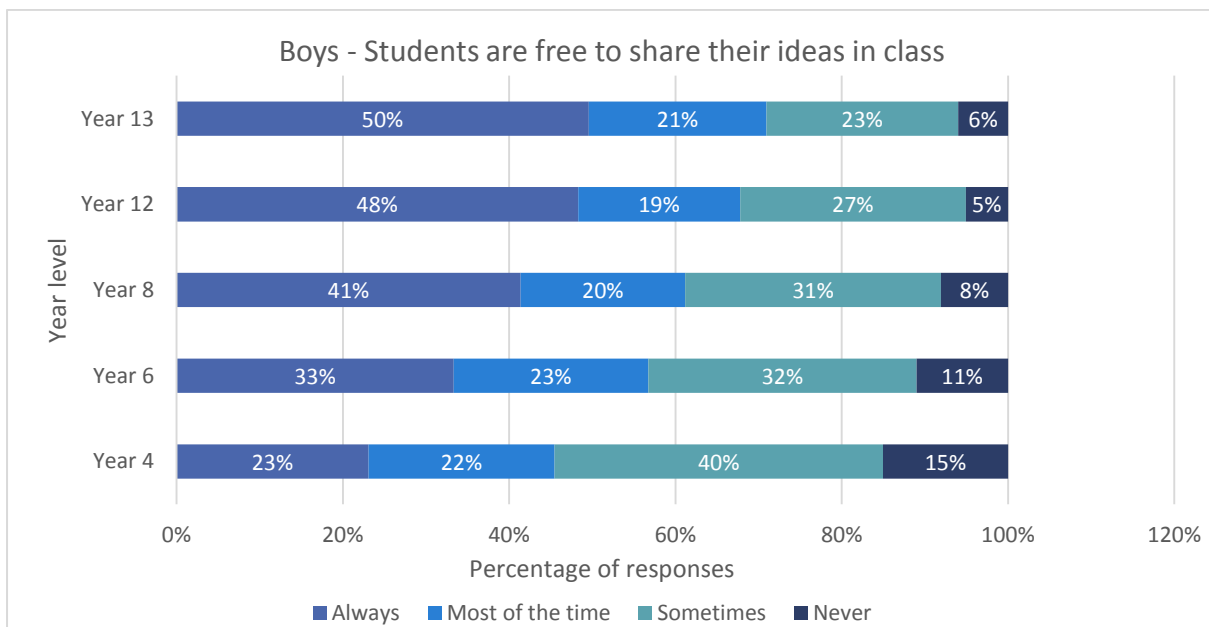


Figure 51 shows that the majority of high achieving girls, or between 57% and 79% say they are free to share their ideas in class most or all the time. A higher proportion of high achieving girls in primary school responded that they are never free to share ideas in class, compared to their secondary school counterparts.

Figure 52 on the other hand shows except for Year 4, the majority of low-achieving boys also think they are free to share their ideas in class most or all of the time. The proportions across the year levels range from 56% in Year 6 to 71% in Year 13. In Year 4, however, the proportion of low-achieving boys who respond this way is less than half at 45%.

Figure 52. Low-achieving boys - free to share ideas in class



### 4.3.8 My teacher manages classroom behaviour well

Figure 53. High achieving girls - teacher manages classroom behaviour well

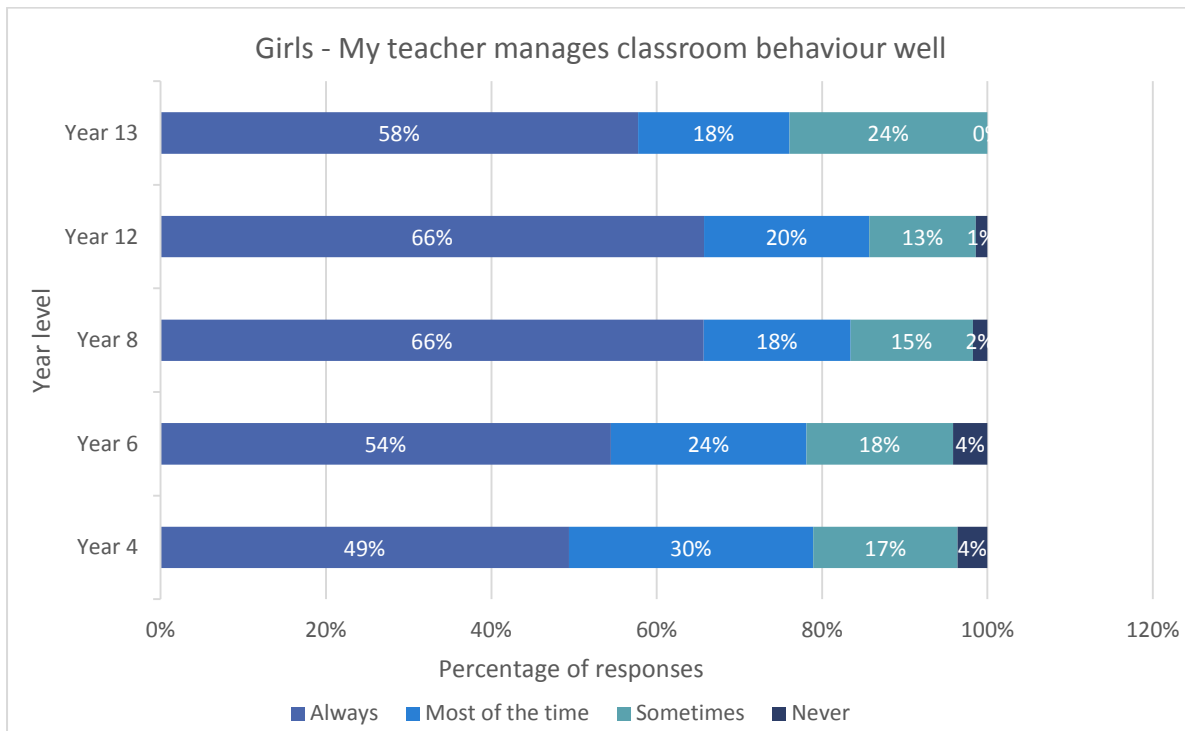
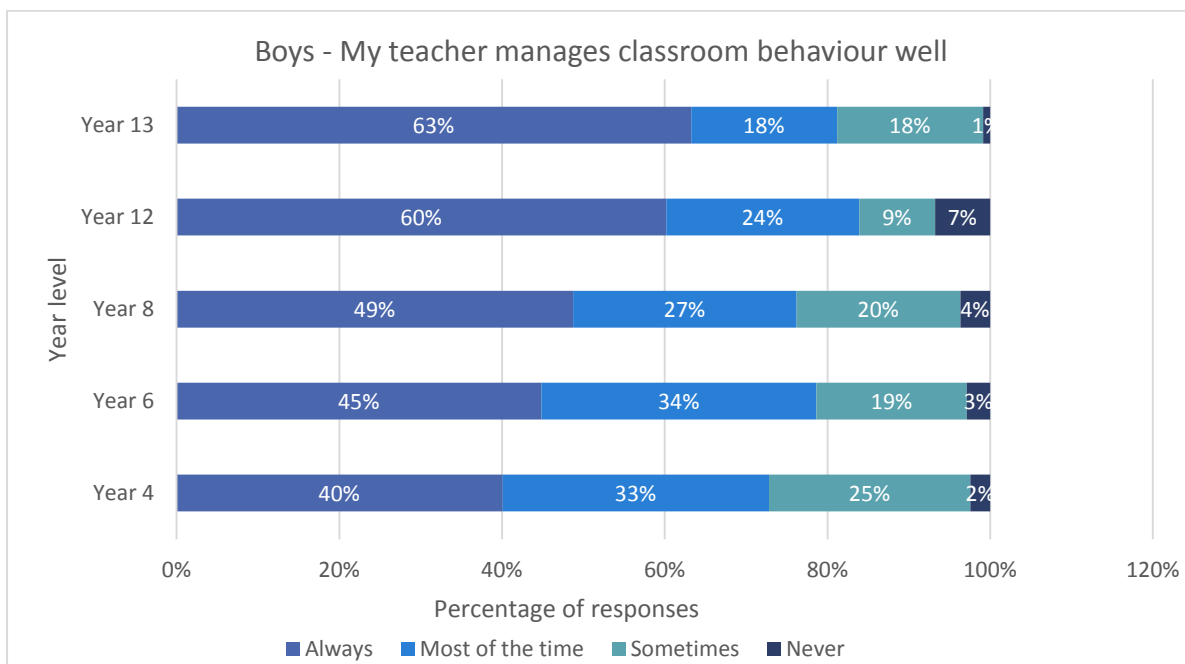


Figure 53 indicates that the majority of teachers manage their classrooms well all or most of the time, according to between 76% and 86% of high achieving girls.

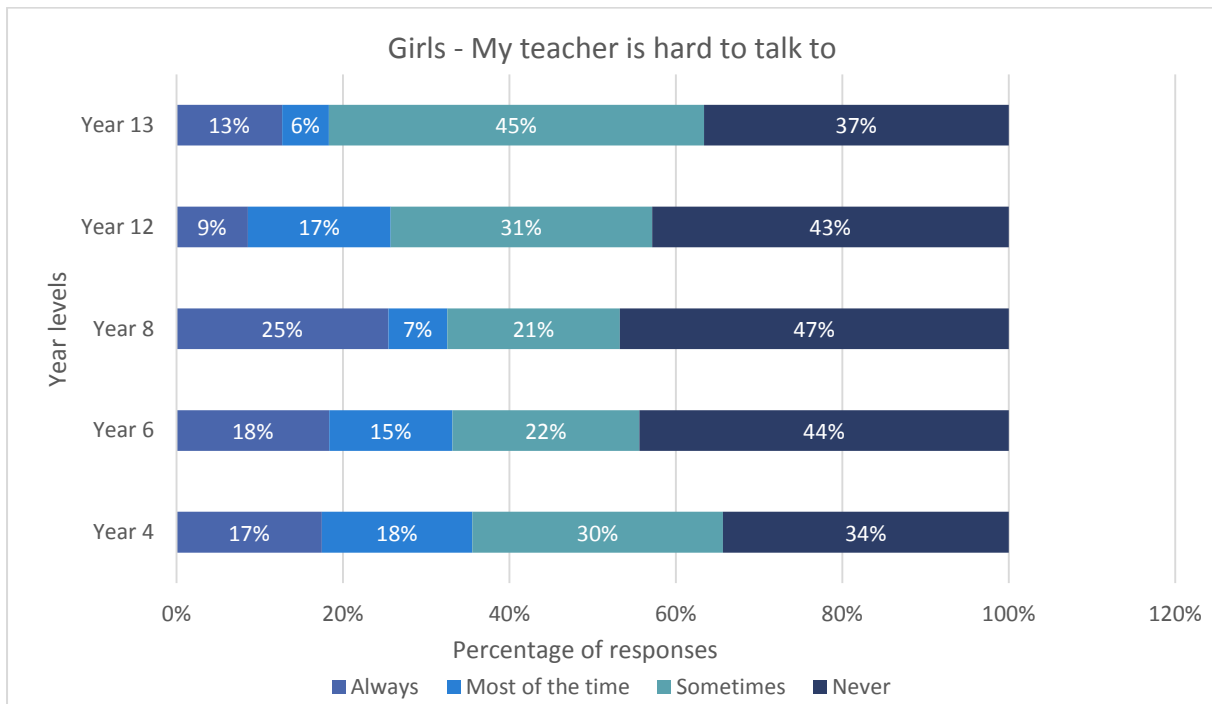
Figure 54 indicates similar proportions for low achieving boys. Between 73% to 84% of low achieving boys think that their teacher manages classroom behaviour well all or most of the time.

Figure 54. Low achieving boys - teacher manages classroom behaviour well



### 4.3.9 My teacher is hard to talk to

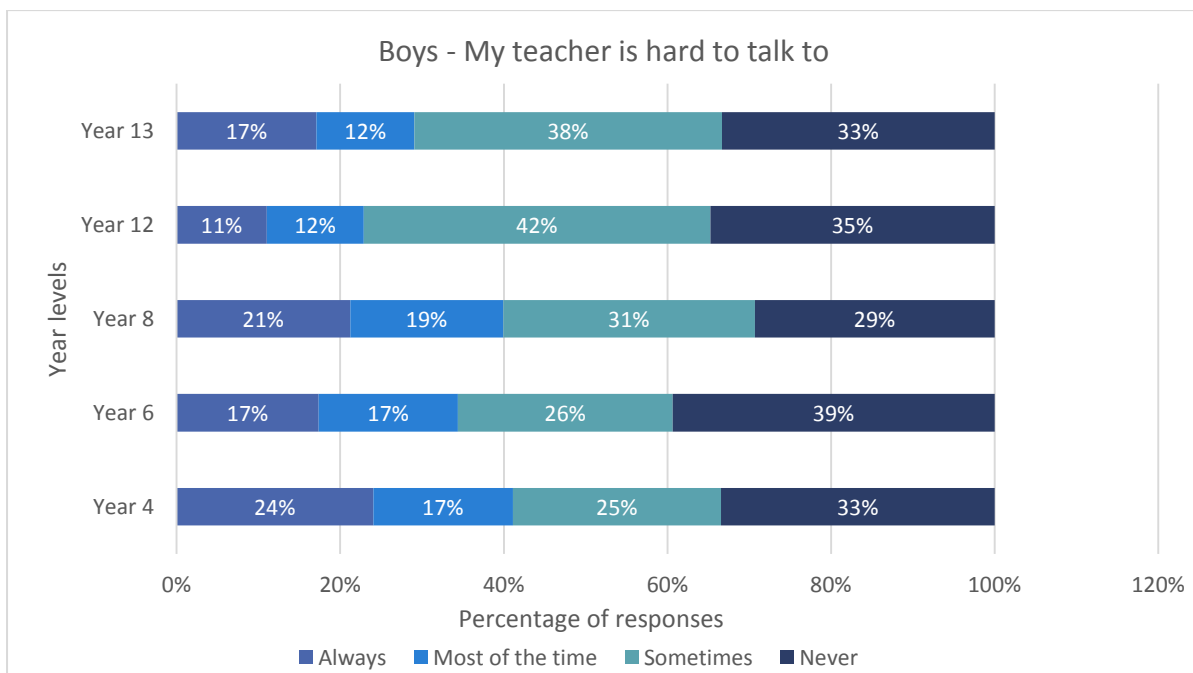
Figure 55. High achieving girls - hard to talk to teachers



As shown in Figure 55, the majority of high achieving girls say their teacher is never or only sometimes hard to talk to, ranging from 64% for Year 4 respondents, compared to 82% of Year 13 respondents.

Figure 56 shows a similar distribution in the responses of low achieving boys. The majority of low achieving boys at all levels also responded that their teacher is never or only sometimes hard to talk to, ranging from 58% of Year 4 respondents, compared to 77% of Year 12 respondents.

Figure 56. Low achieving boys - hard to talk to teachers



#### 4.3.10 My teacher appears prepared for class everyday

Figure 57. High achieving girls - teacher appears prepared for class every day

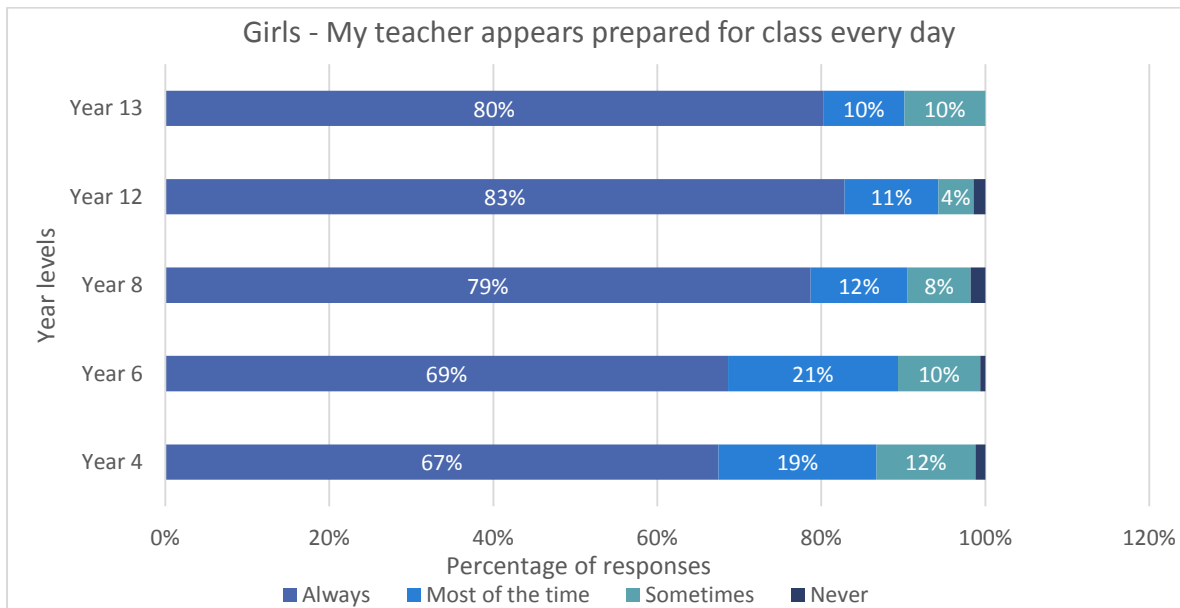
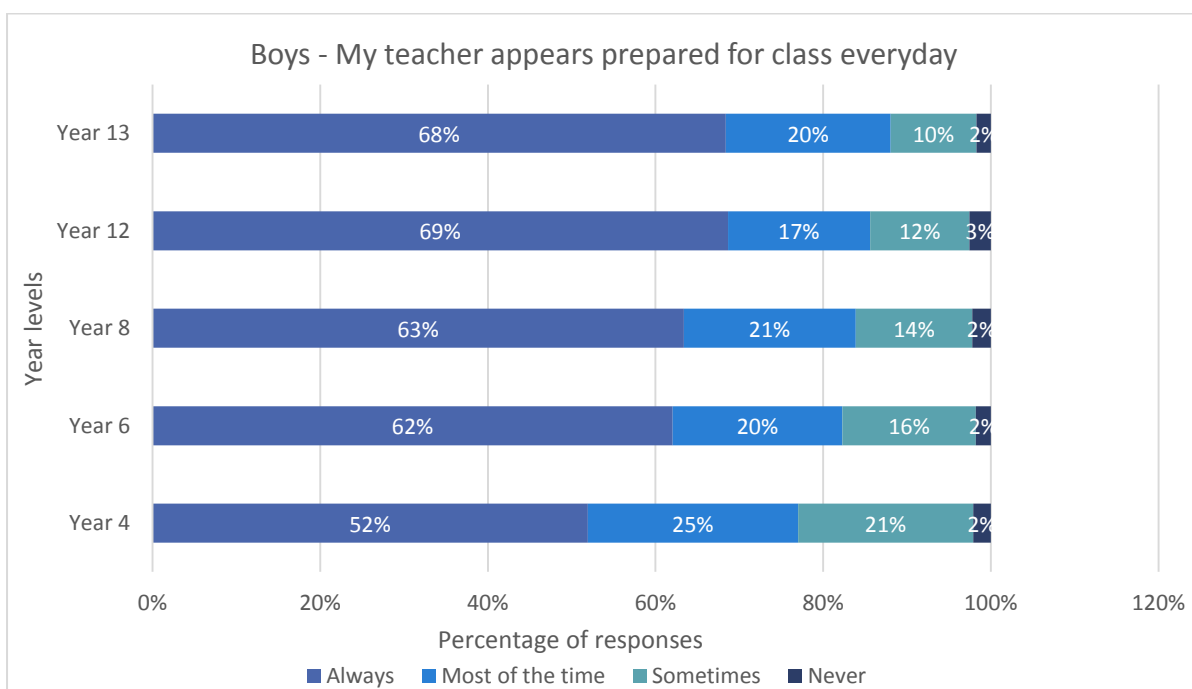


Figure 57 indicates that the vast majority of high achieving girls think that their teacher is prepared for class all or most of the time. Their responses ranged from 86% for Year 4 respondents compared to 94% of Year 12 respondents.

Figure 58 indicates a lower proportion of low achieving boys think their teacher is prepared for class most or all of the time. However, the proportion of low achieving boys who say their teacher is prepared for class all or most of the time is still high across all levels, ranging from 77% in Year 4 to 88% in Year 13.

Figure 58. Low achieving boys - teacher appears prepared for class every day



## 4.4 Difficulties with reading, writing and other subjects

### 4.4.1 Problems with reading

Figure 59. High achieving girls - problems with reading

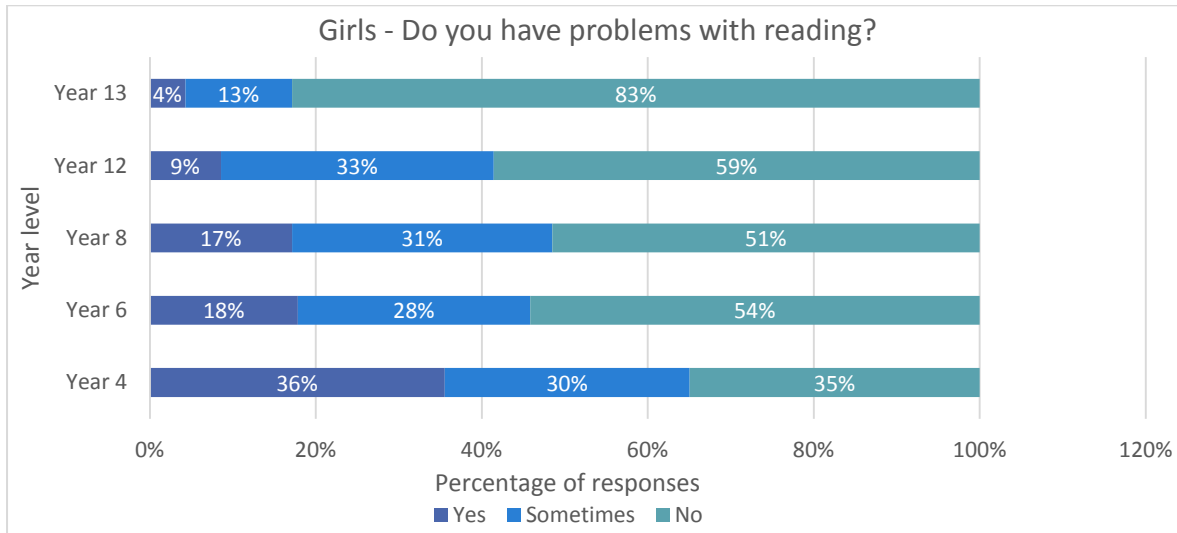
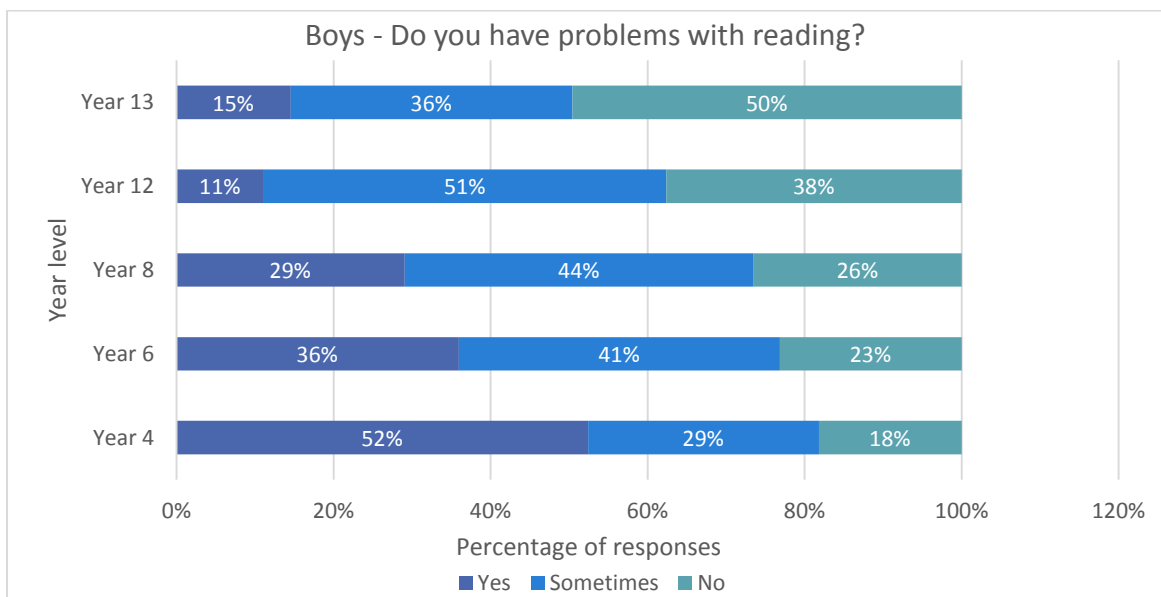


Figure 59 shows the extent of reading difficulty experienced by high achieving girls at all levels. A higher proportion of high achieving girls in primary school say they have problems reading compared to their secondary school counterparts. More than half of the high achieving girls in Year 4 have problems with reading (yes + sometimes). The majority of high achieving girls in secondary school do not report having problems with reading.

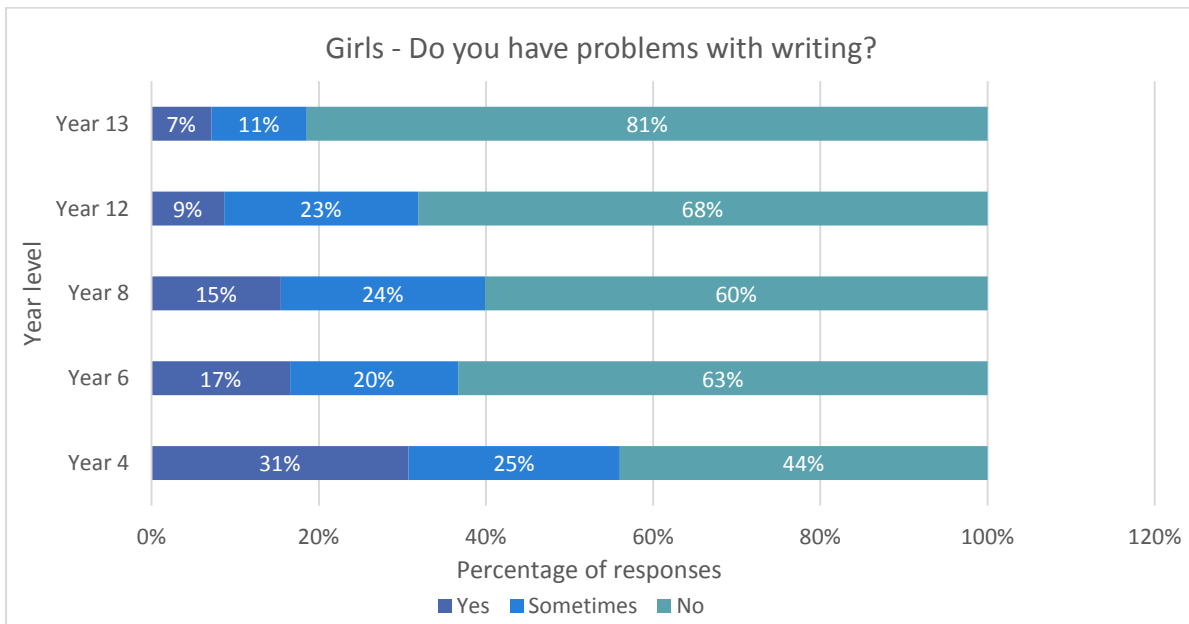
Figure 60 shows that except for Year 13, a higher proportion of low achieving boys say they have reading problems at all levels, compared to high achieving girls. The proportion of low achieving boys in primary school who experience problems with reading is very high, ranging from 81% in Year 4, to 73% in Year 8.

Figure 60. Low achieving boys - problems with reading



#### 4.4.2 Problems with writing

Figure 61. High achieving girls - problems with writing

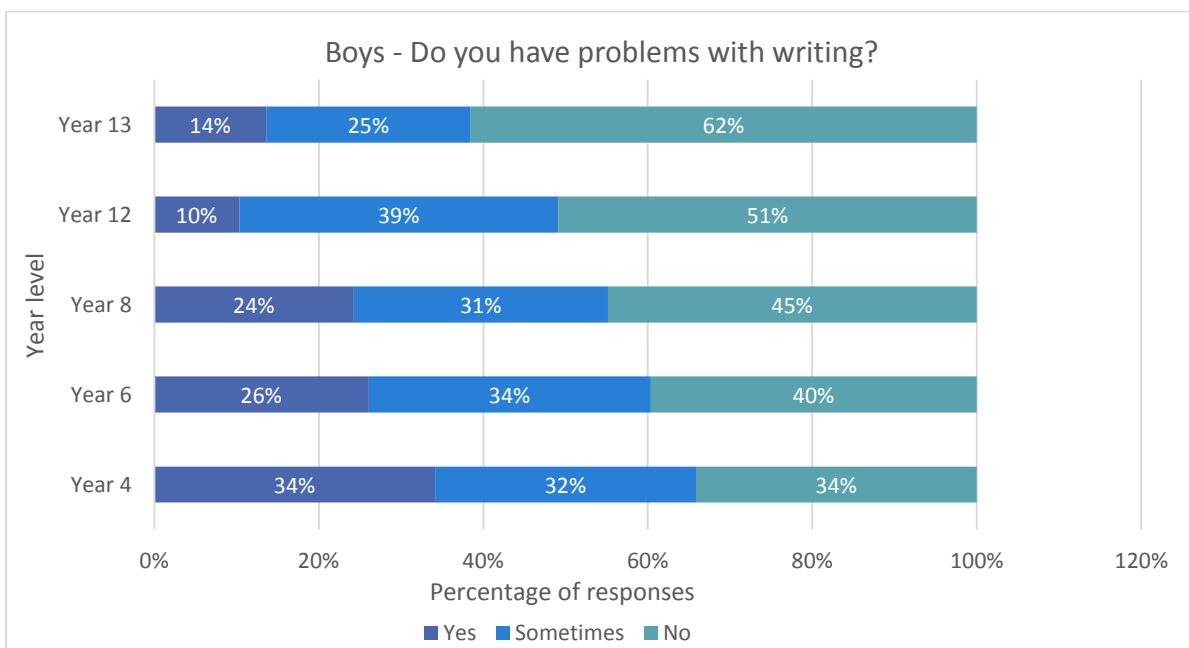


Similar to the previous two graphs, primary school children are more likely to have problems with writing. Figure 61 indicates that for high achieving girls, 39% in Year 8, 37% in Year 6 and a very concerning 54% in Year 4 responded that they have problems with writing.

As shown in Figure 62 for low achieving boys, more than half experience problems with writing in the primary school levels. This represents 55% in Year 8, 60% in Year 6 and 66% in Year 4.

Altogether, a similar percentage of high achieving girls and low achieving boys have problems with writing in Year 4. However, this gap increases as the children get older, with the largest gap in year 13.

Figure 62. Low achieving boys - problems with writing



### 4.4.3 Understanding of English

Figure 63. High achieving girls - understanding of English

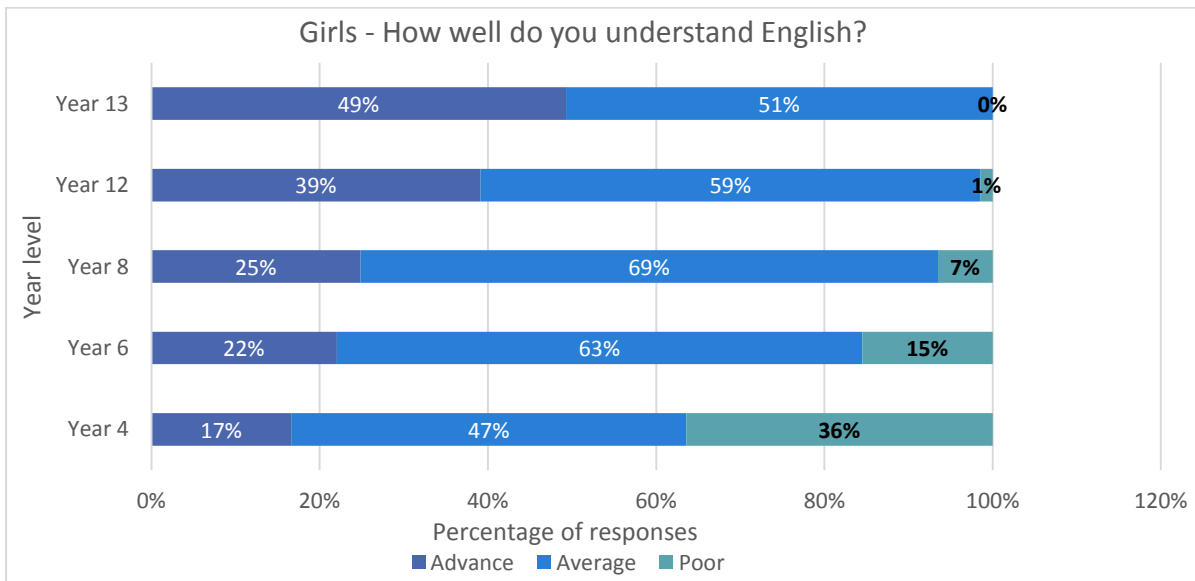
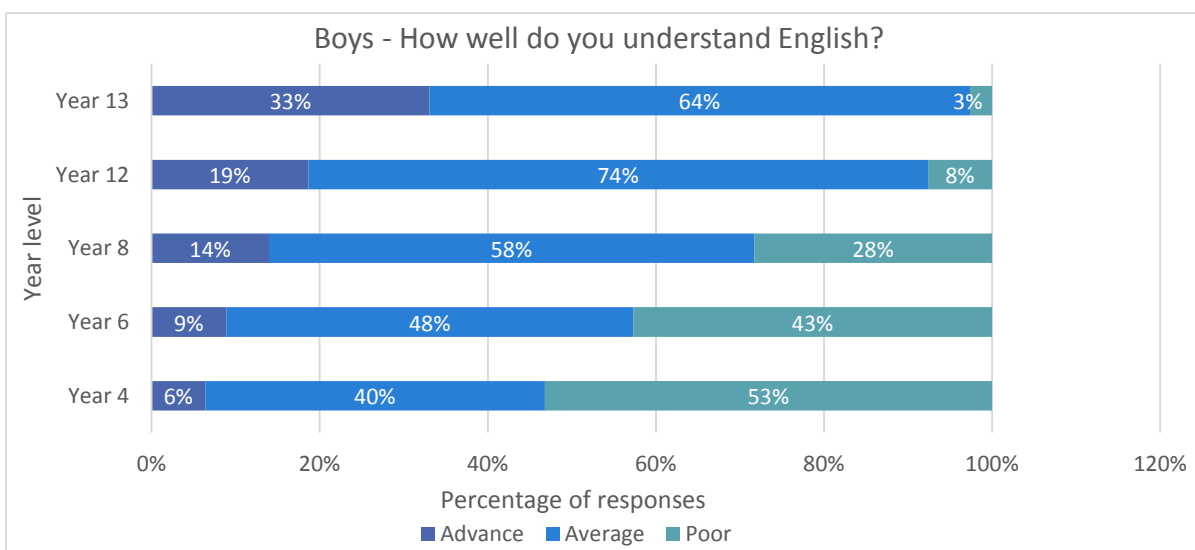


Figure 63 shows that the majority of high achieving girls see themselves as having average or advanced understanding of English, with a higher proportion in secondary school compared to primary school. High achieving girls in Year 4 have the highest proportion reporting they have poor understanding of English, at 36%.

Figure 64 shows that the majority of low achieving boys in Year 4 (53%) reported a poor understanding of English.

High achieving girls in Years 4, 8 and 12 are more than twice as likely to report having advanced understanding of English compared to low achieving boys in their year level. High achieving girls in Years 6 and 13 are more than 1.5 times as likely to report advanced understanding of English compared to low achieving boys in the same year level.

Figure 64. Low achieving boys - understanding of English



#### 4.4.4 Speaking in English

Figure 65. High achieving girls - speaking in English

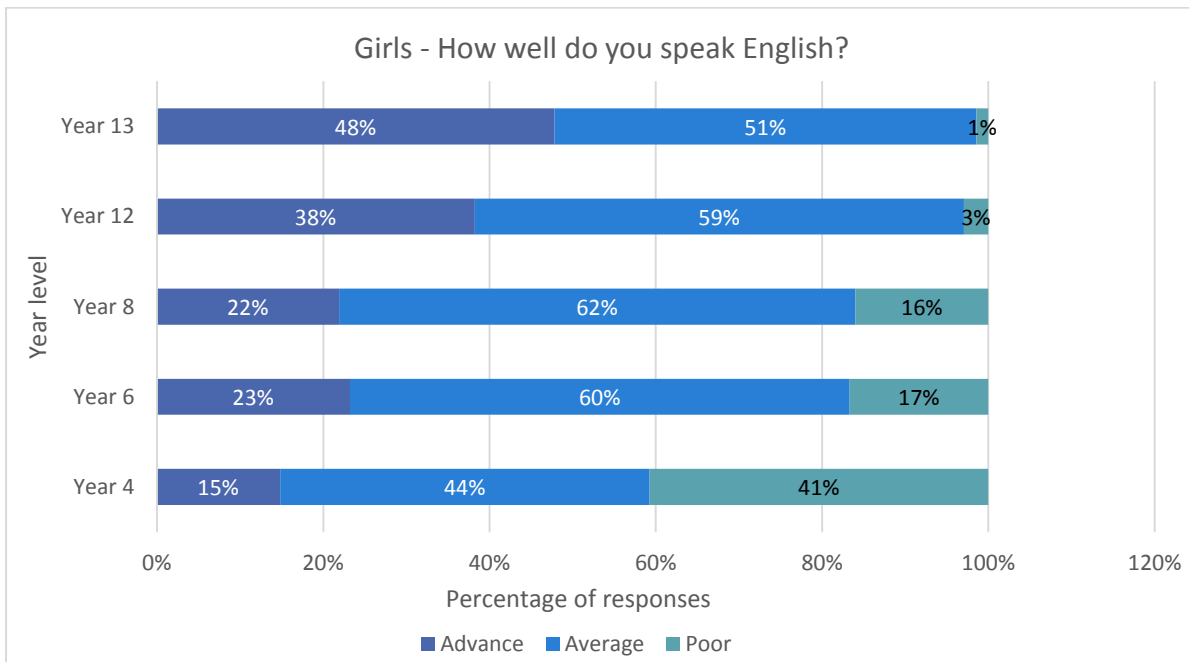
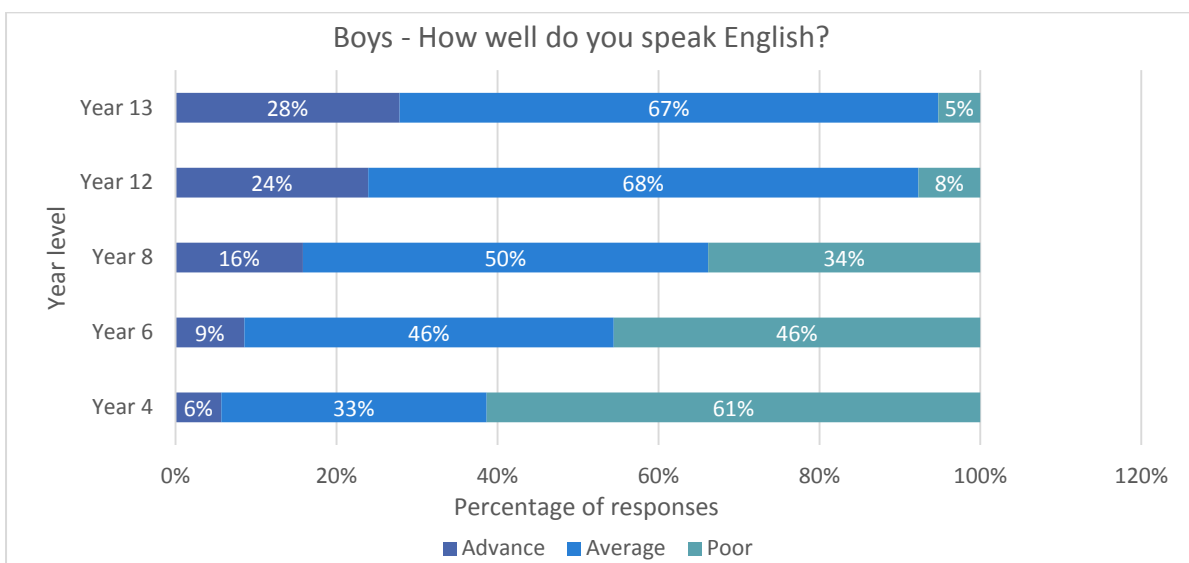


Figure 65 indicates that the proportion of high achieving girls who report themselves as being 'average' speakers of English comprises the largest group of respondents across all year levels. High achieving girls in secondary school are more likely to say they have advanced ability to speak English compared to primary school. 41%, or 2 out of every 5 high achieving girls in Year 4 say they are poor speakers of English.

Figure 66 shows that a much higher proportion of low achieving boys say their ability to speak English is 'poor', compared to the high achieving girls group, across all year levels. This gap is biggest in primary school. A certain percentage of low achieving boys say they have advanced ability to speak English, ranging from 6% in Year 4 to 28% in Year 13, with increasing proportions in the year levels in between.

Figure 66. Low achieving boys - speaking of English





#### 4.4.5 Reading in English

Figure 67. High achieving girls - reading in English

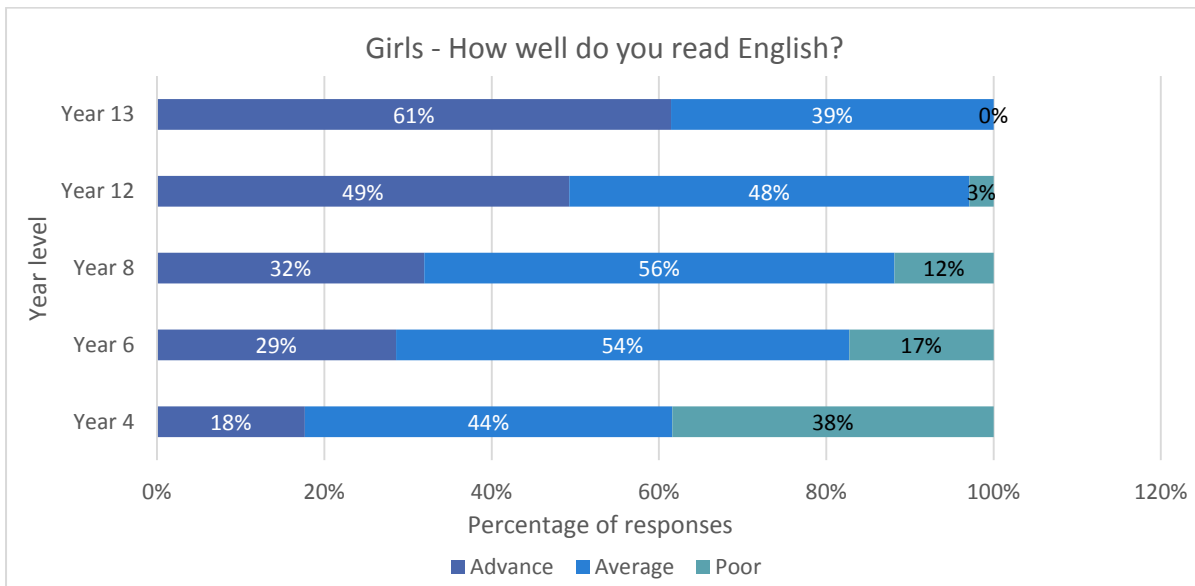
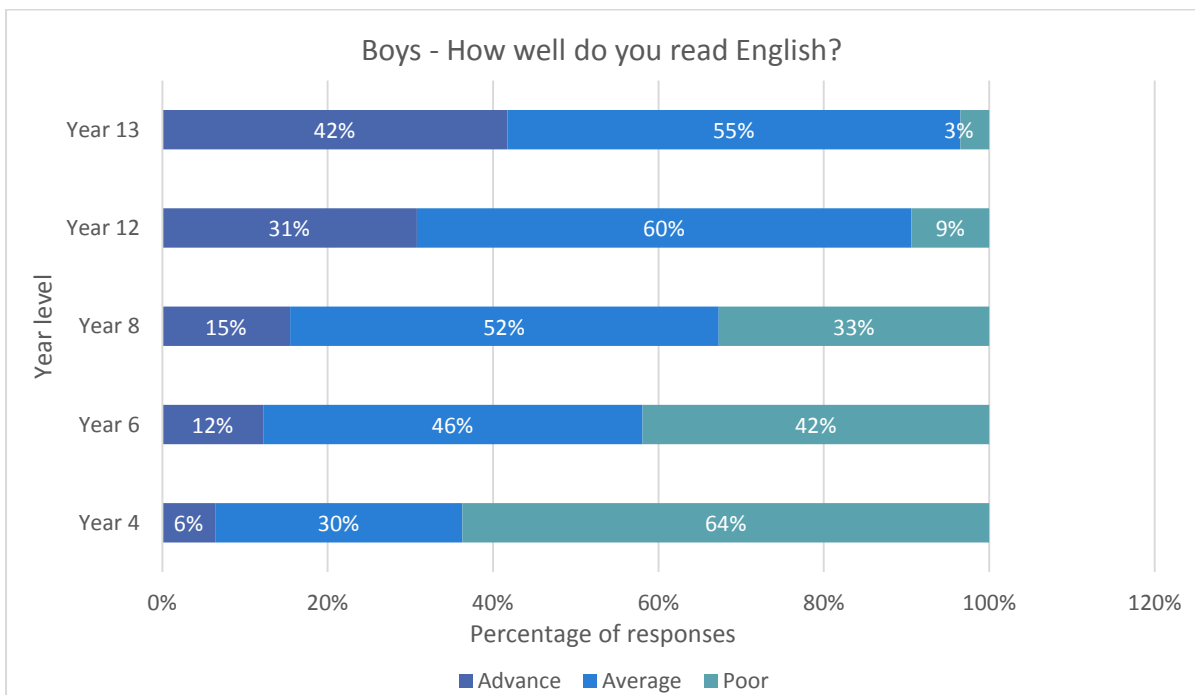


Figure 67 indicates that almost all high achieving girls in secondary school report advanced or average ability in reading English. A certain percentage of high achieving girls in primary school report poor ability to read English, ranging from 38% in Year 4, 17% in Year 6 to 12% in Year 8.

Figure 68 shows that the largest proportion of respondents for low-achieving boys are those who say they have average reading ability in all levels except Year 4. The proportion of boys who say they have poor reading ability in English is very large in primary school, with 64% in Year 4, 42% in Year 6 and 33% in Year 8.

Figure 68. Low-achieving boys - reading in English



#### 4.4.6 Understanding of Gagana Samoa

Figure 69. High achieving girls - understanding of Gagana Samoa

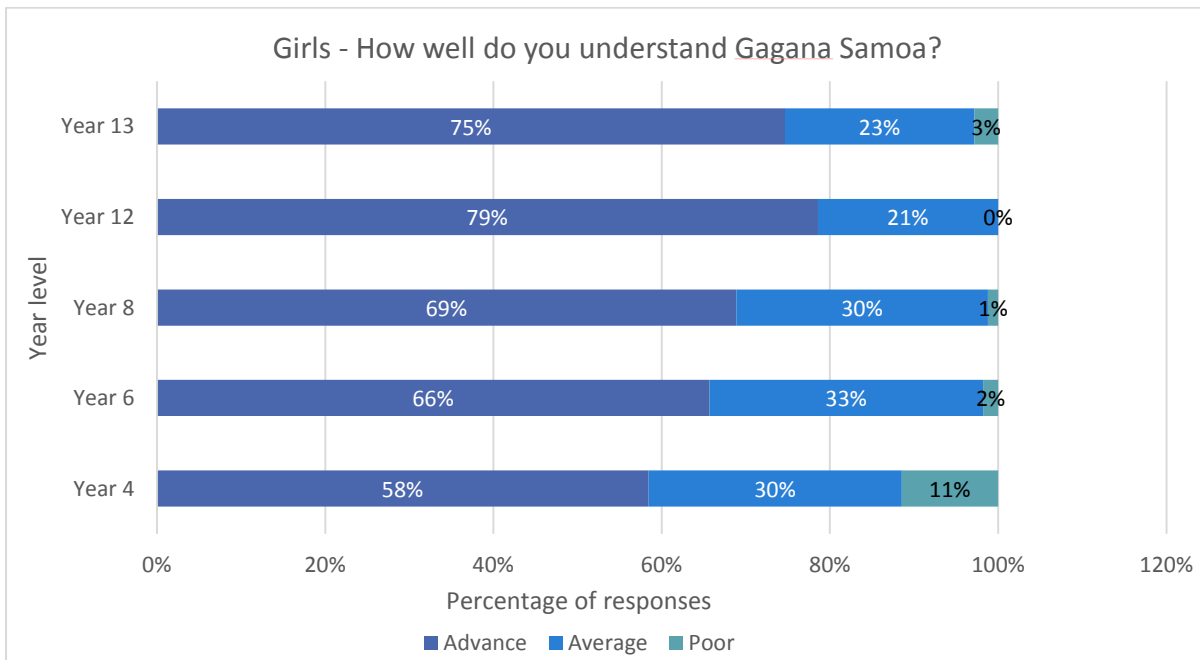
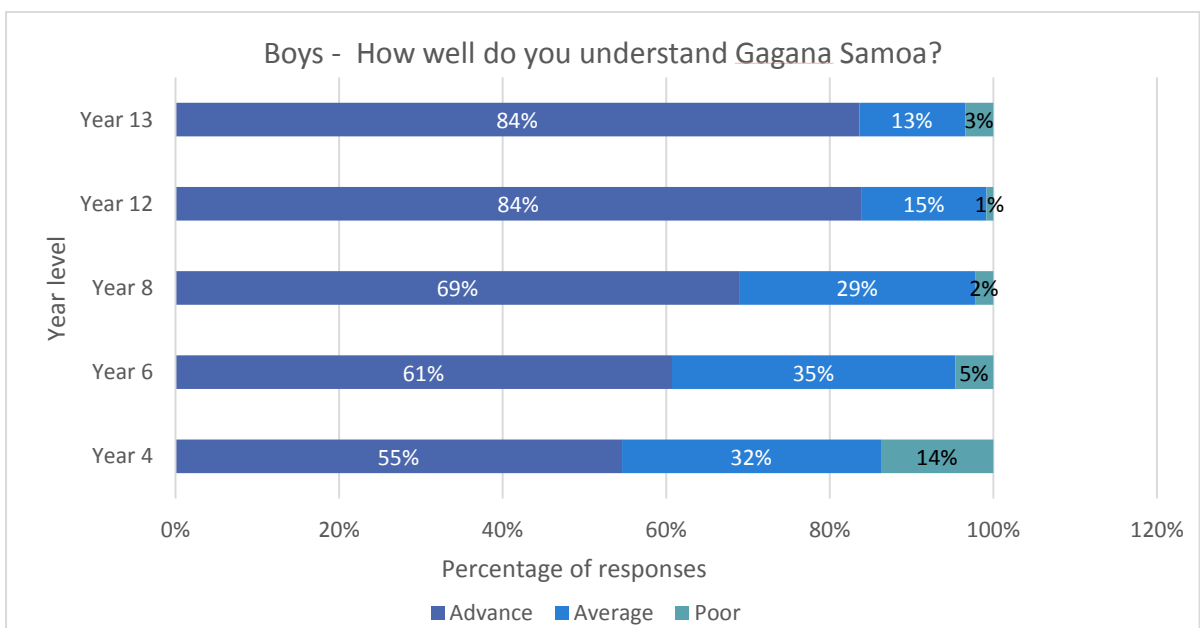


Figure 69 shows a clear majority of high achieving girls say they have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa, ranging from 58% in Year 4 to 79% in Year 12. Concerningly, 11% of Year 4 high achieving girls, or one in every ten, say they have poor understanding of Gagana Samoa.

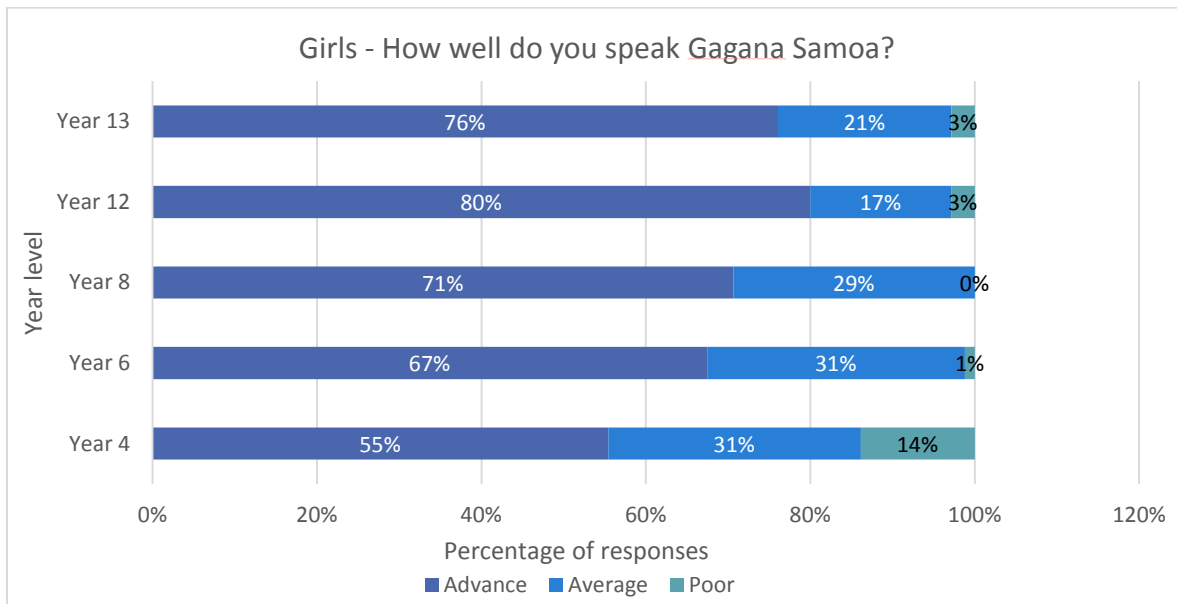
Figure 70 shows a similar pattern among low achieving boys, with a clear majority say they have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa, at all year levels. The proportion of low achieving boys who say they have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa is the same at Year 8 as for high achieving girls. The proportion is lower at Years 4 and 6, and higher at Years 12 and 13.

Figure 70. Low achieving boys - understanding of Gagana Samoa



#### 4.4.7 Speaking Gagana Sāmoa

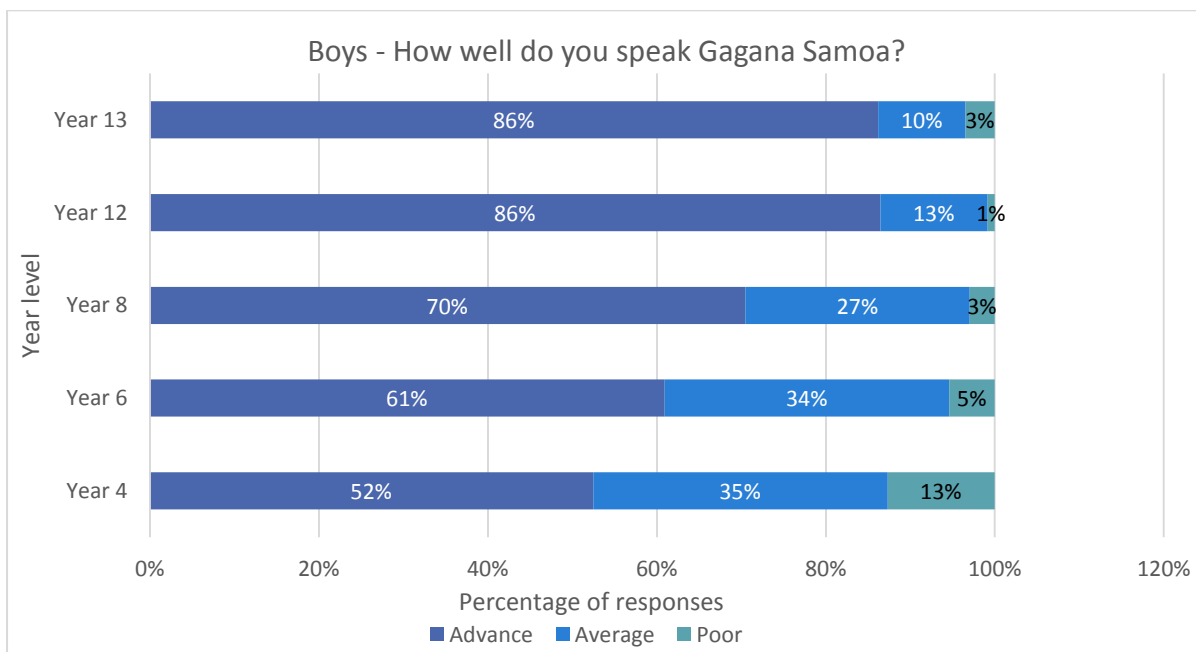
Figure 71. High achieving girls - speaking Gagana Samoa



As shown in Figure 71, the responses of high achieving girls regarding their ability to speak Gagana Samoa is very similar to their responses regarding their ability to understand Gagana Samoa. That is, a clear majority report advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa. However, there is still 14% of high achieving girls in Year 4 which say their ability to speak Gagana Samoa is poor.

Figure 72 shows the proportion of low-achieving boys who have advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa is highest in the secondary levels compared to the primary levels. The majority of low-achieving boys at all levels report an advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa. Similar to high-achieving girls in the same level, 13% of low-achieving boys in Year 4 say their ability to speak Gagana Samoa is 'poor'.

Figure 72. Low-achieving boys - speaking Gagana Samoa



#### 4.4.8 Reading Gagana Sāmoa

Figure 73. High achieving girls - reading Gagana Samoa

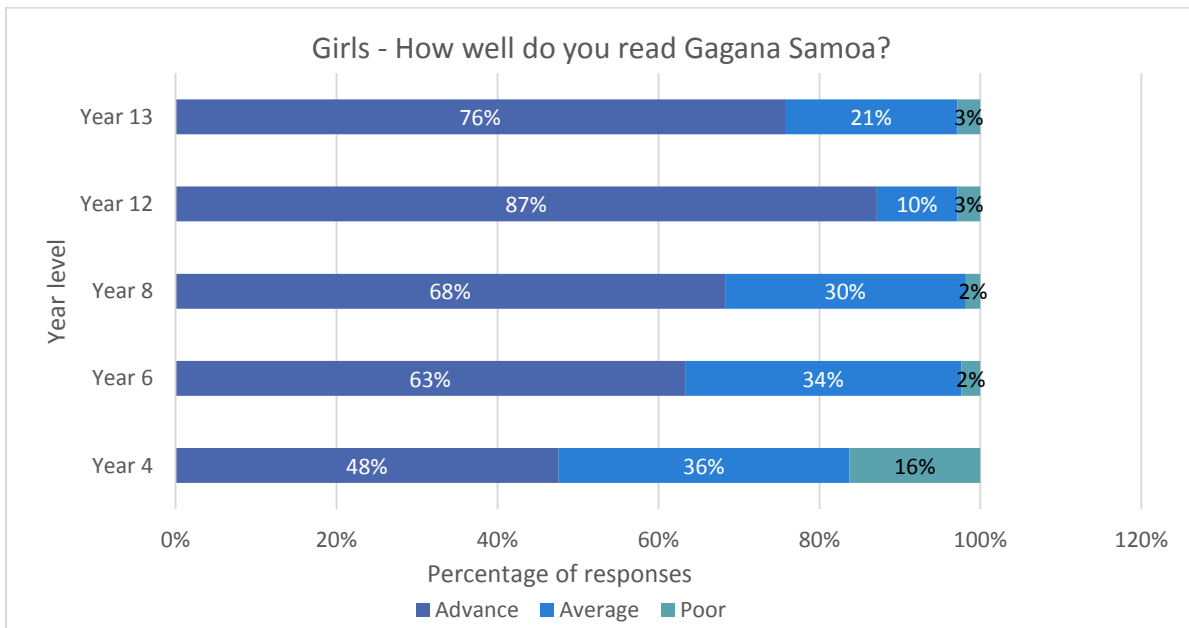
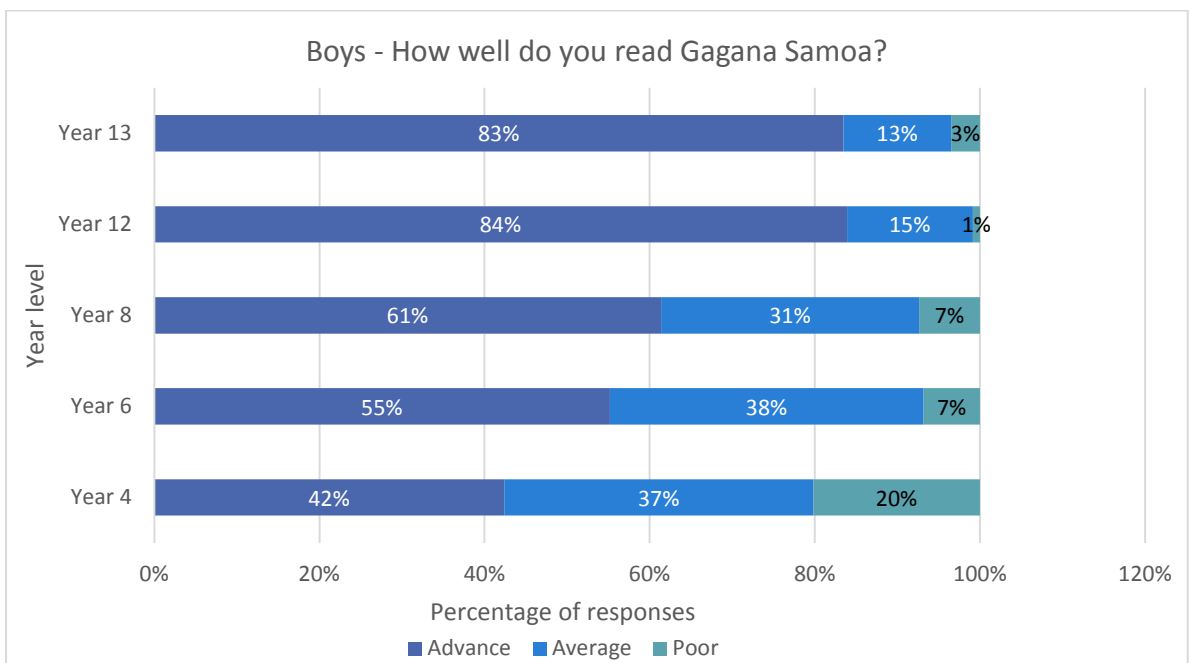


Figure 73 shows the majority of high achieving girls in all year levels except Year 4 report an advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa. In Year 4, just under half of high achieving girls say they have advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa, while about a third indicate they have average ability. 16% of high achieving girls in Year 4 say they have poor ability to read Gagana Samoa.

Figure 74 shows the majority of low achieving boys also report advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa in all levels except Year 4. 20% or one in five low achieving boys say they have a poor ability to read Gagana Samoa.

Figure 74. Low achieving boys - reading Gagana Samoa



#### 4.4.9 Problems in Mathematics

Figure 75. High achieving girls - problems with Mathematics

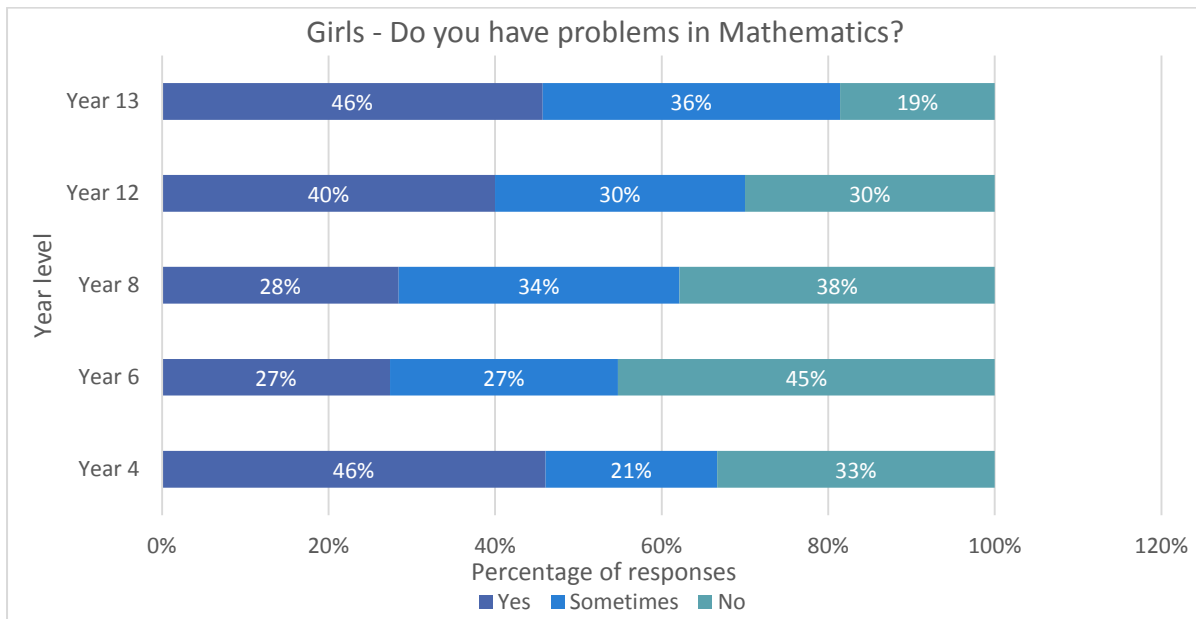
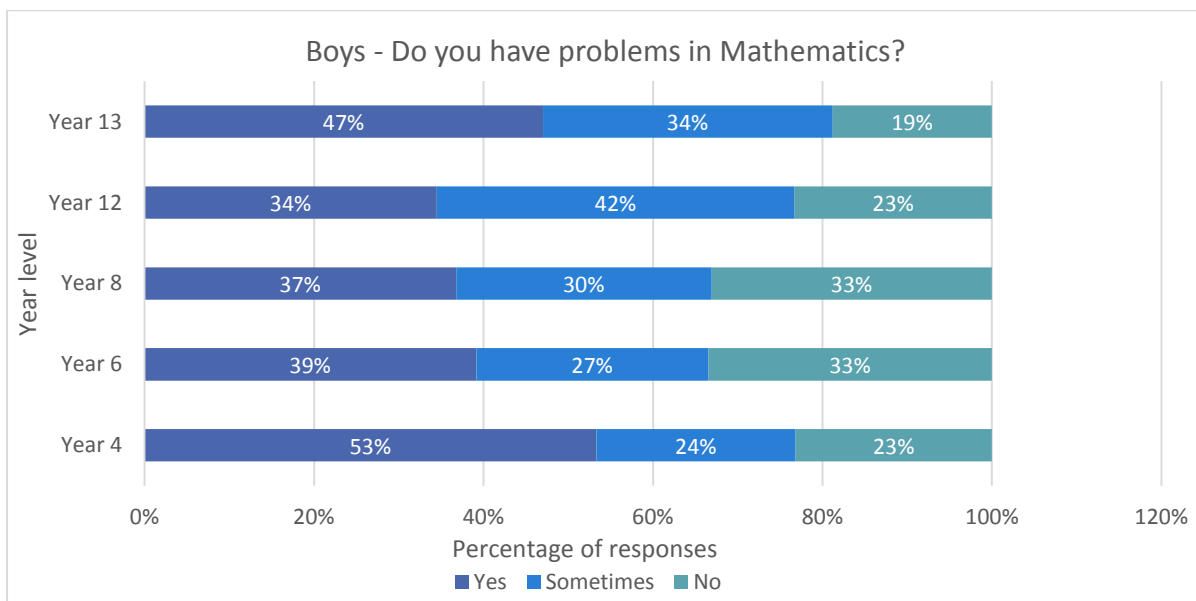


Figure 75 highlights the proportions of high achieving girls that have problems with Mathematics at all levels. The majority of high achieving girls at every level have experienced problems with Mathematics ('yes' and 'sometimes'). The highest proportion is found in Year 13, with 82% of high achieving girls experiencing problems with Mathematics. The lowest proportion is found in Year 6, with 54% having the same experience.

Figure 76 shows that the majority of low achieving boys at every level have experienced problems with Mathematics ('yes' and 'sometimes'). The highest proportion is found in Year 13, with 82% reporting having problems with Mathematics. The lowest proportion of the low-achieving boys' group who experience problems with Mathematics is found in Years 6 and 8, at 67%.

Figure 76. Low-achieving boys - problems with Mathematics



#### 4.4.10 Access to needed help

Figure 77. High achieving girls - access to needed help

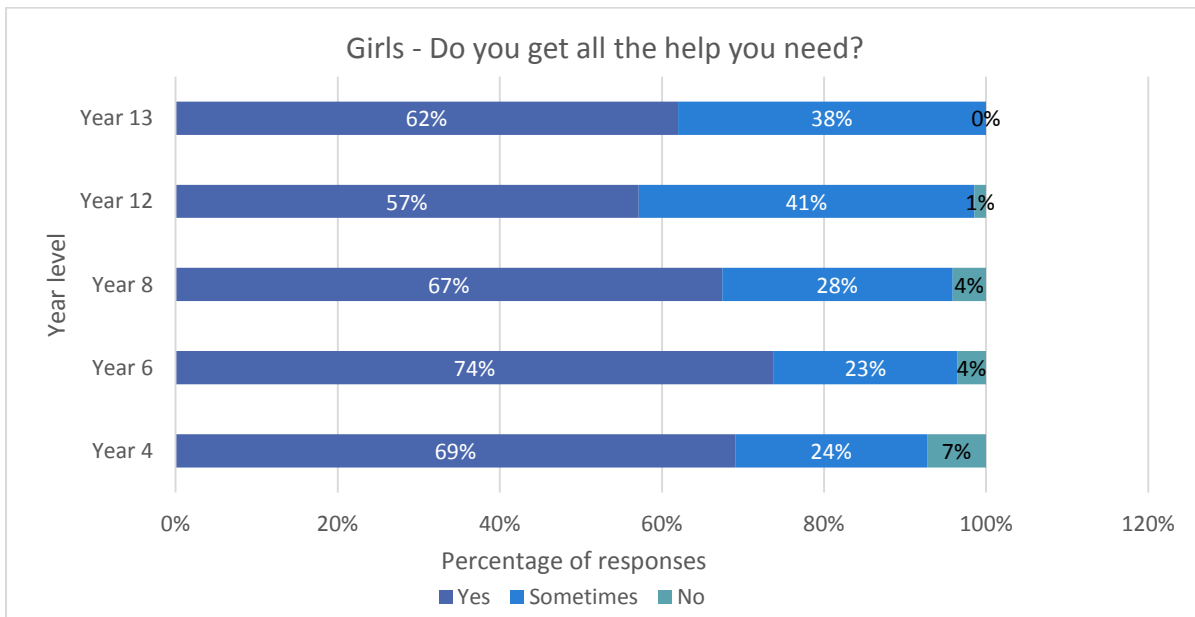
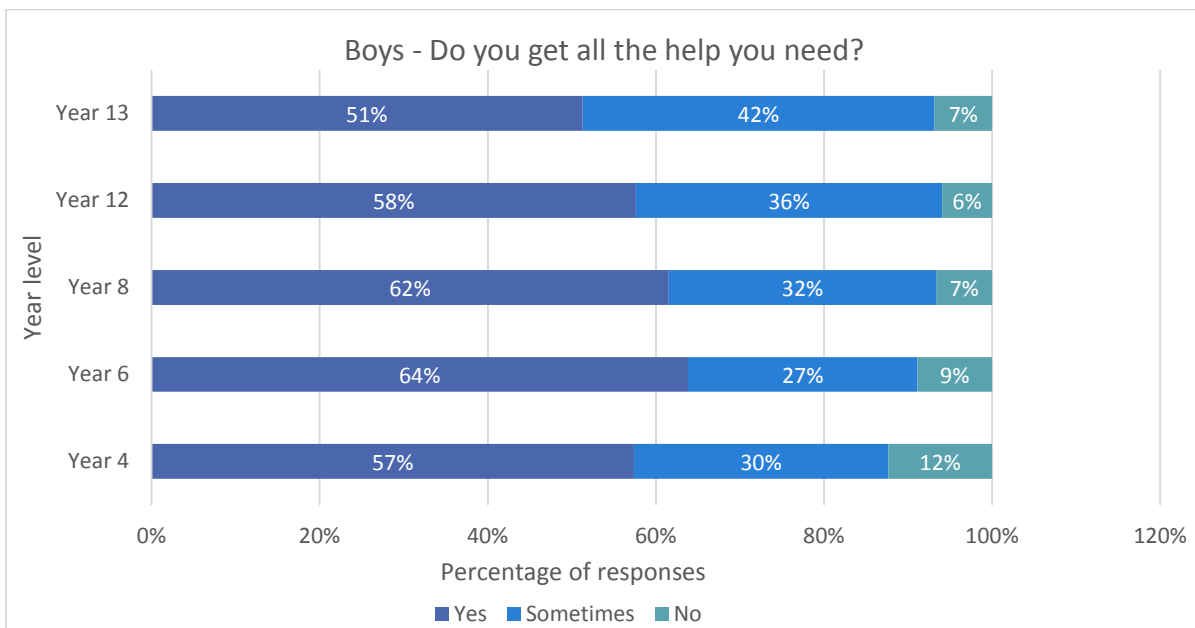


Figure 77 indicates that the majority of high achieving girls in all levels get all the help they need, as shown in their 'yes' responses. This represents between 57% of high achieving girls in Year 12, and 74% of their counterparts in Year 6.

Figure 78 shows a similar pattern for low achieving boys, with the majority in every year level indicating that they do get all the help they need ('yes' response). This represents between 51% of low achieving boys in Year 13, and 64% in Year 6. There is a concerning proportion of low achieving boys who say they do not get all the help they need. Between 6% and 12% of low achieving boys at the various levels indicate they do not get all the help they need.

Figure 78. Low achieving boys - access to needed help



## 4.5 Bullying and corporal punishment

### 4.5.1 Experience with being bullied at school

Figure 79. High achieving girls - being bullied at school

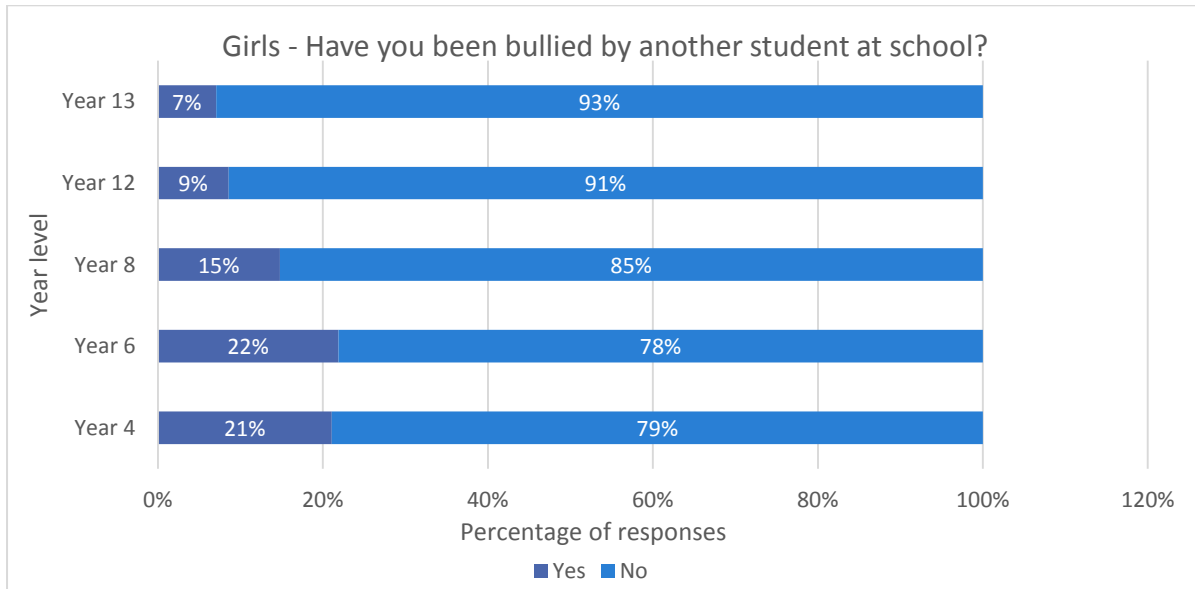
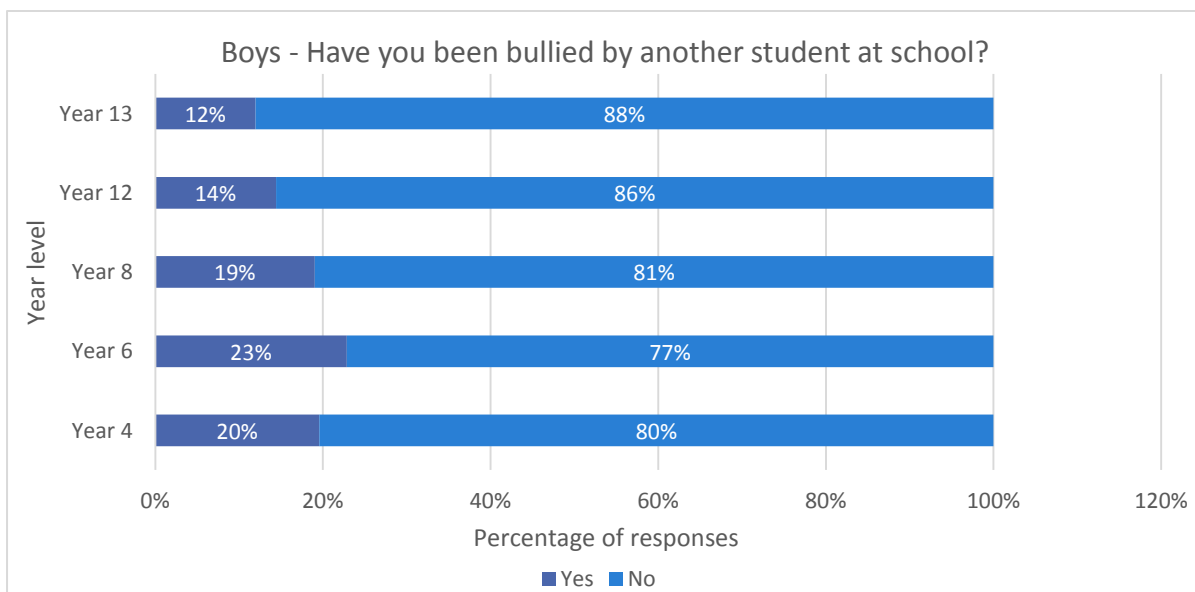


Figure 79 shows that between 7% and 21% of high achieving girls have experienced bullying by another student at school. The proportion is higher in primary than secondary. More than 20% of high achieving girls in Years 4 and 6 have experienced bullying by another student, this is a concerning number as it represents one in every five girls.

Figure 80 shows higher proportions of low achieving boys have experienced bullying by another student at every year level except Year 4. The proportions are also higher in primary school. Approximately one in every five low achieving boys in Years 4, 6 and 8 has experienced bullying. In Years 12 and 13, more than one in every ten low-achieving boys experienced bullying by another student at school.

Figure 80. Low-achieving boys - being bullied at school



#### 4.5.2 Experience of physical, verbal or emotional abuse by teachers

Figure 81. High achieving girls - experience of physical, verbal or emotional abuse from teachers

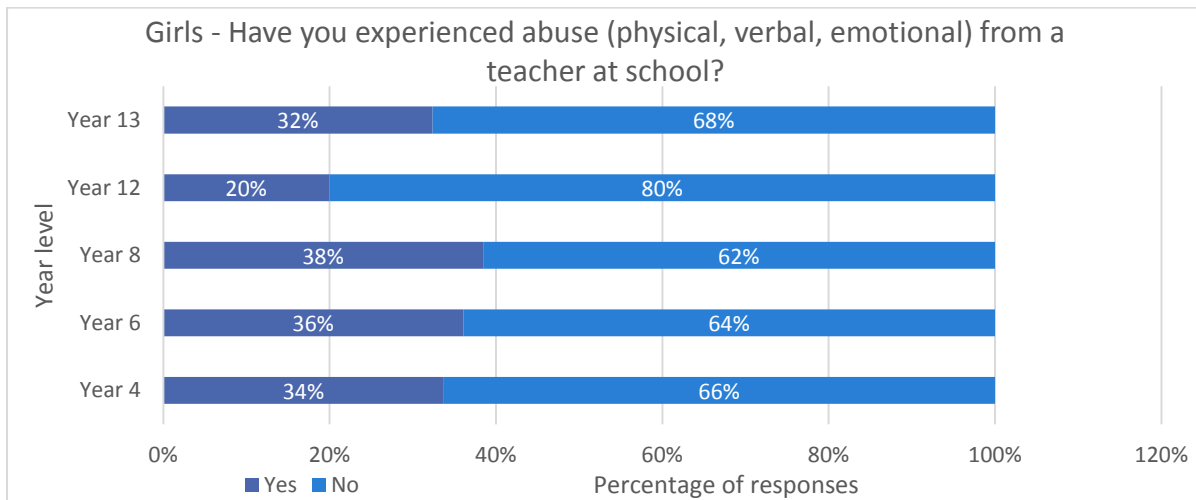
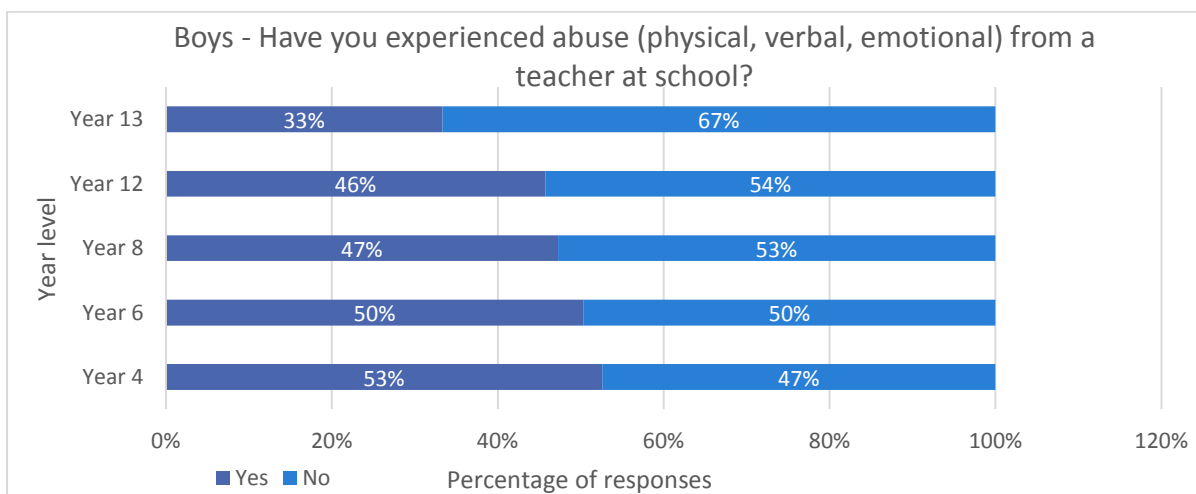


Figure 81 and Figure 82 show the proportion of high achieving girls and low achieving boys who have experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school.

Figure 81 shows an average of 36% of high achieving girls in the primary levels have experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school. This is extremely concerning as this number represents one in every three girls in the primary level. In the secondary level, 20% or one in every five high achieving girls in Year 12 say they have experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher. The proportion is higher for Year 13 girls, with 32% or approximately one in every three girls reporting this experience.

For low-achieving boys as shown in Figure 82, the percentages are higher than for high-achieving girls. An average of 50% of low-achieving boys in the primary levels have experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher at school. This percentage represents one in every two boys in primary school. The incidence of physical, verbal or emotional abuse for low-achieving boys in the secondary levels is not much lower, with 33% in Year 13 having experienced this (one in every three boys), and almost half of all Year 12 boys.

Figure 82. Low-achieving boys - experience of physical, verbal or emotional abuse from teachers





## 4.6 Teachers' and parents' perceptions of the reasons behind boys' underachievement

### 4.6.1 Teachers' perspectives on the reasons for male students' underachievement

Table 2. Teachers' perceptions of reasons for male students' underachievement

Teachers also provided their thoughts regarding the root of male students' underachievements in their classrooms as outlined in Table 1. The most common reason identified by 45 percent of the participating teachers, is that male students are always absentminded and have no commitment to study. Another factor they observed in their classrooms causing male students underachievement is what they described as indolent behaviour, being easily distracted during lessons or class activities.

### 4.6.2 Teachers' perspectives on the contributing factors to female students' achievement

Digging further to reveal the reasons behind female students' higher achievement compared to male students, obtained in Table 6 are the causes

observed by the teachers of their outstanding achievements academically. Up to 46 percent of the participating teachers agree, that females are 'Exceptionally focussed' in the classrooms during lessons delivery and it is the sole reason why they learn fast. Other reasons stated by some of the teaching staff include those female students are hard workers and constantly study hard, they are usually committed to every school task, and are habitual readers. Another interesting source of female great achievement as 15 percent of the teachers identified, is those female students are given less and light home chores and 12% stated that they are typically prioritized by culture.

<i>Reasons provided by teachers for male students' underachievement</i>	<i>Frequency in %</i>
Absentmindedness and lack of commitment to study	45%
Indolent and easily distracted during lessons	35%
Responsible for numerous and heavy home chores	26%
Sports focus and fun-loving	25%
Negligent and uninvolved parenting	25%
Low self-motivation and poor time management	16%
Poor basic skills - reading, writing, and numeracy	13%
Regular poor attendance	12%
Frequently failed to submit homework and in-class activities on time	11%
Lack of special regard and respect for authorities	9%
Slow learning ability	9%
Influence of bad association	6%
Self-contained and independent	4%
No bridging classes to cater to their learning needs	1%
Difficult and ambiguous curriculum	1%

Teachers' reasons for female students' achievements	Frequency in %
Exceptionally focussed	46%
Hardworking and studying harder	31%
Committed to every school task	19%
Given less and light home chores	15%
Self-disciplined	10%
Gets all parents' attention and support	10%
Optimistic and creative	9%
Habitual readers	9%
Open-mindedness in-class discussion	9%
Ability to learn quickly	7%
Always set study goals and plan ahead	7%
Willingness to obey and respect instructions	6%

Well shaped by their parents	6%
Empathetic and considerate toward parents	3%
Girls are naturally smarter	2%
Little to no language barriers	2%
Managed their times wisely	2%

#### 4.6.3 Parents' perspectives on the reasons for male students' underachievement

Parents were also asked to provide their perspectives on the reasons behind male students continuing underachievement in school. Table 2 provides a summary of parents' perspectives regarding the issue of

male students' underachievement in school.

A third of parents believe that contributing factors are the low self-motivation of male students and not wanting to study. 30 percent of parents believe that male children prefer to focus on sports and fun rather than committing to study.

Around a fifth of all parents suggested that one of the factors contributing to male students' poor performance in school is their primary responsibility for heavy home chores. Therefore male students are fatigued by the time they need to study, and they do not have the energy to study. The same proportion of parents (around 20%) blames negligent and uninvolved parenting, as well as male students being indolent and easily distracted.

*Table 3. Parents' perceptions of reasons behind male students' underachievement*

Parents' perspective: reasons for male students' underachievement	Frequency in %
Low self-motivation and never study	32%
Sports focus and fun-loving	30%
Numerous heavy home chores rely on them	22%
Lack of special regard and disrespectful	21%
Indolent and easily distracted	21%
Negligent and uninvolved parenting	20%
Never manage their time wisely	16%
Influence of bad association	13%
Cyber and social media distraction	8%
Spoiled by grandparents	7%
Teachers' biased treatment of students	5%
Slow learning ability	4%
Confusing and ambiguous curriculum conveyance by teachers	4%
No bridging classes for slow learners	4%
Poor basic skills - reading, writing, and numeracy	3%
Male children are naturally ignorant	2%
Corporal punishments by teachers	2%
Engaged in unhealthy and bad habits	2%
Irregular attendance	2%
Poor family environment	1%

#### 4.6.4 Parents' perspectives on the reasons for female students' achievement

When asked about their views as parents on the reasons why female students continually achieve higher academically than boys, parents unhesitantly provided the responses outlined in Table 3.

Just under half (47%) of participating parents believe that female students' achievement is due to their being hardworking and studious. Around a fifth of parents (23%) believe that the high achievement of female students is due to their characteristics such as obedience, respect, and devotion to prayer.

Sixteen percent of parents also added that their female children are habitual readers and twelve percent said that female students are committed and open minded.

*Table 4. Causes of female children consistent higher achievement*

Parents perspective: Reasons for female students' consistent high achievement	Frequency in %
Hardworking and studious	47%
Obedient, respectful, and devoted to prayer	23%
Habitual readers	16%
Committed and open-minded	12%
Given less with home chores	6%
Always on time and never misses school	6%
Never embarrassed to ask questions to clear ambiguity	5%
Eager to learn socially and academically	5%
Optimistic and creative	5%
Managed their times wisely always plan ahead	4%
Well-shaped by their parents	4%
Empathetic and considerate toward parents	3%
Get all parent's attention and support	2%
Enjoys studying with friends or siblings	2%
Fast learner	2%
Female children are naturally smarter	1%
Raised in a healthy and ecstatic family environment	1%
Always avoid bad association	1%

#### **4.6.5 Parents' perspectives – difficulties with supporting children's academic studies**

Parents were interviewed about any difficulties they encountered while supporting their children academically. A dominant percentage of parents emphasized financial hardship as their most common difficulty in supporting their children. Other related difficulties borne out by parents are detailed in Table 4. 14 percent of participating parents indicated that their children are reluctant to attend school and study.

*Table 5. Difficulties in supporting children academically*

Difficulties encountered by parents in supporting children academically	Frequency in %
Financial hardships	56%
Children are reluctant to attend school and study	14%
No problem at all	14%
The remoteness of school from home	8%
Hard to discipline children	8%
Corporal punishments by teachers	7%
Knowledge deficiency to help with their studies at home	6%
Other competing priorities at work and the church sometimes take up all times	6%
Teachers' poor commitment (no homework)	6%
Social media and electronic devices distraction	4%
School starting time is too early	4%
Influence of bad association	2%
Anxiety homework and curriculum for the children	2%
Small family members have to deal with numerous home chores	1%
Uninvolved parenting	1%
The child has a learning disability	1%
Failed marriage causes a child's depression	1%

Terms used by teachers are confounding for the children	1%
Children are spoiled by grandparents	1%

Classification of parents' responses regionally, 84 percent of parents in the Savaii Region pointed to financial hardships as the most common difficulty they are now facing, while 19 percent of the same population identified their children's unwillingness to attend school and to study as one of the difficulties they are now facing in supporting them academically. 11% of parents put up corporal punishments by teachers as the main reason for students' reluctance to attend school. Other difficulties and the percentages of parental responses are outlined in Table 5.

*Table 6. Savaii Region parents respond to difficulties they encounter while supporting their children*

Difficulties faced by parents in Savaii Region	Frequency in %
Financial hardships	84%
Children are reluctant to attend school and study	19%
Corporal punishments by teachers	11%
Other competing priorities at work and the church sometimes take up all times	5%
Teachers' poor commitment (no homework)	3%
Social media and electronic devices distraction	3%
Hard to discipline children	2%
Anxiety homework and curriculum for the children	2%
Knowledge deficiency to help with their studies at home	1%
Influence of bad association	1%
The child has a learning disability	1%
Failed marriage causes the child's depression	1%
Children are spoiled by grandparents	1%
The remoteness of school from home	1%

42 percent of parents from the Rest of Upolu region responded to having no problems while supporting their children's educational needs.

*Table 7. Rest of Upolu parents' responses to difficulties they encountered while supporting their children*

Difficulties faced by parents in the Rest of Upolu Region	Frequency in %
No problem at all	42%
Financial hardships	24%
The remoteness of school from home	23%
Knowledge deficiency to help with their studies at home	15%
Hard to discipline children	14%
Other competing priorities at work and the church sometimes take up all times	10%
Teachers' poor commitment (no homework)	5%
Social media and electronic devices distraction	4%
Influence of bad association	4%
School starting time is too early	2%
Corporal punishments by teachers	2%
Children are reluctant to attend school and study	2%
Small family members to have deal with numerous home chores	1%
Uninvolved parenting	1%

Outlined in Table 7 are all the difficulties explained by Apia Urban parents they encountered while supporting their children's school. The average difficulty faced by these parents is their children's unwillingness to attend school and study. Financial hardship and teachers' poor commitments are the second and the third regular difficulties.

*Table 8. Difficulties faced by parents in the Apia Urban in supporting their children academically*

Difficulties faced by parents in the Apia Urban Region	Frequency in %
Children are reluctant to attend school and study	22%
Financial hardships	20%
Teachers' poor commitment (no homework)	19%
Hard to discipline children	16%
Anxiety homework and curriculum for the children	12%
Social media and electronic devices distraction	10%
School starting time is too early	7%
Corporal punishments by teachers	4%
Influence of bad association	3%
Small family members have to deal with numerous home chores	3%
The remoteness of school from home	2%
Knowledge deficiency to help with their studies at home	2%
Other competing priorities at work and the church sometimes take up all times	2%
Uninvolved parenting	2%

## CHAPTER 5. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

### 5.1 Summary of patterns among participating male students

#### 5.1.1 Study habits

- Just under half of participating male students in secondary school set study goals all or most of the time, with 48% at Year 13 and 49% in Year 12 responding in this manner
- More than half of participating male students in Years 4 and 6 never set study goals
- The majority of participating male students in all year levels indicated that they have access to needed stationery all or most of the time
- The majority of participating male students in Years 8 and in secondary school revise their notes all or most of the time. Their counterparts in the middle and lower primary levels also report revising their notes all or most of the time, but in much lower proportions
- The majority of participating male students in Years 6 and 8 study with friends or a group; compared to exactly half from Year 13 participating male students and less than half in other year levels
- With the exception of Year 4, more than half of participating male students in all year levels study ahead of a test most or all of the time
- Around half of participating male students in all levels report dedicating time to study most or all of the time, ranging from 47% in Year 13 to 62% in Year 8

- More than half of participating male students in all levels report never or only sometimes spending more time on chores rather than studying
- With the exception of Year 12, more than half of participating male students in all year levels get a good night's sleep before a test all or most of the time

### 5.1.2 Home environment

- The majority of participating male students in all year levels reported that they have a peaceful home to study; however, up to 10% in Years 8 and 4 say that they do not have a peaceful home to study
- According to participating male students, less than two thirds, but more than half of their parents know their school progress all or most of the time; however, for Year 4 – this proportion is less than half
- The majority of primary school participating male students indicate that their parents do chores all or most of the time, so they have time to study. Less than half of participating male students in secondary school had the same response, indicating that more than half might be mostly responsible for chores
- Just over half of Year 12 and Year 8 male respondents indicate that they have many reading books at home. A clear majority of their counterparts in Year 13 had a similar response, compared to under half of Year 4 and Year 6 male participating students
- Parents helped with reading at home most or all of the time, for 71% of male participating students in primary school, about 50% of those in Year 12 and less than half of those in Year 13
- More than half of participating male students in all levels responded that their parents communicate with their teachers regarding their progress all or most of the time
- More than 10% of participating male students at every year level except Year 13 responded that their teachers never talk with their teacher about their progress
- Between 44% to 53% of all participating male students had experienced not being able to communicate with their parents at some point
- Between 15% to 22% of participating male students watch tv or play video games all or most of the time at home. The majority of participating male students, however, responded that they never or only sometimes watch tv or play video games at home

### 5.1.3 School environment

- The majority of participating male students felt that their teachers were caring most or all of the time; this proportion extended from 66% in Year 4, to 88% in Year 13. However, the proportion who reported that their teacher 'never' made them feel like they care is much higher for those in primary school compared to secondary school
- At least 60% of participating male students agreed that their teacher cares more for female students at least sometimes (includes 'sometimes', 'most of the time', 'always')
- The majority - 60% to 71% - of participating male students also indicate their teachers treat them with respect all or most of the time. However, the proportion of boys who say their teachers never treat them with respect varies from 9% in Year 13 to 16% in Year 4
- The majority - 60% to 83% - of participating male students agreed that their teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly all or most of the time

- The majority - 52% in Year 4 to 71% in Year 8 – of participating male students indicated that their teacher re-delivers subjects in which they are at risk, all or most of the time
- The majority - 60% to 79% - of participating male students say they learn new topics most or all the time
- With the exception of those in Year 4, the majority of participating male students feel that they are free to share their ideas in class all or most of the time
- The majority - 73% to 84% - of participating male students think that their teacher manages classroom behaviour well, all or most of the time
- The majority of participating male students feel that their teacher is never or only sometimes hard to talk to, ranging from 58% of Year 4 respondents, compared to 77% of Year 12 respondents
- The proportion of participating male students who think their teacher is prepared for class most or all of the time is high across all levels, ranging from 77% in Year 4 to 88% in Year 13

#### **5.1.4 Reading, writing and numeracy**

- The proportion of participating male students in primary school who experience problems with reading is very high, ranging from 73% in Year 8 to 81% in Year 4. The majority of their counterparts in secondary school also responded that they have experienced problems with reading.
- More than half of participating male students have experienced problems with writing in the primary school levels. This represents 55% in Year 8, 60% in Year 6 and 66% in Year 4.
- The majority of participating male students from Year 6 onwards say they have average or advanced ability to understand English; one third of Year 13 male respondents indicated that they have advanced ability to understand English
- 6% of participating male students in Year 4 up to 28% in Year 13 indicated that they have advanced ability to speak English, with increasing proportions in the year levels in between. The proportion of male student participants who report themselves as being 'average' speakers of English comprises the largest group of respondents in Years 8, 12 and 13.
- Regarding reading ability in English, the proportion of male respondents who say they have poor ability is very large in primary school, with 64% in Year 4, 42% in Year 6 and 33% in Year 8.
- The majority of participating male students at all year levels indicated that they have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa
- The proportion of participating male students who have advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa is higher in the secondary levels compared to the primary levels. The majority of participating boys at all levels report an advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa.
- The majority of participating male students in all levels except Year 4 also indicated that they have advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa. 20% or one in five participating boys say they have a poor ability to read Gagana Samoa.
- The majority of participating male students at every level have experienced problems with Mathematics ('yes' and 'sometimes'). The highest proportion is found in Year 13, with 82% reporting having problems with Mathematics.

- The majority of participating boys in every year level indicate that they do get all the help they need for school

### 5.1.5 Bullying and corporal punishment

- Between 12% and 23% of participating male students have been bullied by another student at school. Approximately one in every five participating boys in Years 4, 6 and 8 has experienced bullying. In Years 12 and 13, more than one of every ten participating male students has experienced bullying by another student at school
- An average of 50% of male participants in the primary levels have experienced physical, verbal, or emotional abuse from a teacher at school. This percentage represents one in every two boys in primary school. The incidence of physical, verbal or emotional abuse for male participants in the secondary levels is not much lower, with 33% in Year 13 having experienced this (one in every three boys), and almost half of all Year 12 boys. These statistics represent an unacceptable situation in schools.

## 5.2 Summary of patterns among participating female students

### 5.2.1 Study habits

- The majority of participating girls in secondary school set study goals all or most of the time, with 56% in Year 13, and 57% in Year 12 responding as such. Interestingly, more than half of the participating girls in Year 4 never set study goals.
- With the exception of Year 12, the majority of participating female students have access to needed stationery to help with their studies, all or most of the time.
- The majority of participating female students in all year levels revise their notes in their own words to help them understand what they are learning in class, all or most of the time. The proportions range from 52% in Year 4 to 76% in Year 13.
- With the exception of Year 12, the majority of participating girls indicated that they study with friends or a group all or most of the time.
- At least two thirds of participating female students in all year levels study ahead of a test most or all of the time.
- The majority – 63% to 82% - of participating girls set aside time to study all or most of the time; with a higher proportion in primary school compared to their secondary counterparts
- More than two thirds of participating female students report never or only sometimes spending more time on chores compared to studying
- At least 22% of participating female students report spending more time on chores than studying, all or most of the time. In other words, the proportion of participating female students who indicate that they do chores more than studying, all or most of the time is equivalent to: at least one in every five girls in Year 13, at least one in every four girls in Year 8, and at least one in every three girls in Years 4, 6, and 12.



- The majority of participating female students in all levels get a good night's sleep before a test most or all of the time. The highest proportions of participating girls who sleep well before a test are in year 4, with the proportions declining as they get older.

### 5.2.2 Home environment

- More than two thirds - 63% to 82% - of participating female students report having peaceful surroundings at home to study.
- For the vast majority of participating female students at all levels, their responses indicate that their parents always know of their progress in school
- The majority of participating girls responded that their parents do chores all or most of the time so that they have more time to study; with higher proportions in primary school compared to secondary school
- The majority of participating female students indicate that they have many reading books at home
- Parents helped with reading at home all or most of the time for more than 75% of participating female students in primary school
- The majority of participating female students responded that their parents always, or most of the time, communicate with their teacher regarding their progress. The proportion is highest in Year 8 and lowest for girls in Year 12.
- More than 10% of participating girls at every year level except Year 8 responded that their teachers never talk with their teacher about their progress
- 43% of participating girls in Year 12 and 35% in Year 13 have attended an extra tutorial outside of school. A higher proportion of participating female students in secondary school have attended extra tutorials at least sometimes, compared to their counterparts in primary school.
- Half of the participating female students in Year 12 and under half of their counterparts in other year levels were not able to communicate with their parents at some point
- Between 9% and 27% of participating female students watch tv or play video games at home all or most of the time, with the highest percentage being 27% in Year 13

### 5.2.3 School environment

- A high proportion of participating girls in every year level feel that their teachers are caring most or all of the time; the proportion of girls who responded this way extends from 78% in Year 6, to 88% in Year 4.
- More than half of participating female students at all levels except Year 12 think that their teacher cares more for female students at least sometimes, with more than a quarter saying this happens most or all of the time.
- The majority - between 63% and 77% - of participating female students say that their teacher treats them with respect most or all of the time. Worryingly, 8% to 12% responded that they have never experienced this, evident in the responses from participating girls in Years 4, 6, 8 and 13.
- The vast majority - 74% to 83% of participating girls indicate that their teachers deliver difficult lessons clearly most or all of the time.
- The majority of participating girls from 68% in Year 4, to 84% in Year 12, report that their teacher re-delivers subjects in which they are at risk, all or most of the time

- The majority - 71% to 85% - of participating female students responded that they learn a lot of new topics most or all the time
- The majority of participating female students - between 57% and 79% - feel that they are free to share their ideas in class most or all the time
- The majority of teachers manage their classrooms well all or most of the time, according to the responses from between 76% and 86% of high achieving girls.
- The majority of participating female students say their teacher is never or only sometimes hard to talk to
- The vast majority of participating girls feel that their teacher is prepared for class all or most of the time

#### 5.2.4 Reading, writing, numeracy

- A higher proportion of participating girls in primary school say they have problems reading compared to their secondary school counterparts. More than half of the high achieving girls in Year 4 have problems with reading (*yes + sometimes*). On the other hand, the majority of participating female students in secondary school responded that they do not have problems with reading.
- More than a third (39% in Year 8 and 37% in Year 6) of participating female students in Years 6 and 8 indicate that they have problems with writing; more than half (54%) of the participating girls in Year 4 also indicated having problems with writing.
- The majority of participating female students see themselves as having average or advanced understanding of English, with a higher proportion in secondary school compared to primary school.
- The proportion of participating girls who reported themselves as being ‘average’ speakers of English comprises the largest group of respondents across all year levels. Participating girls in secondary school are more likely to say they have advanced ability to speak English compared to primary school. Conversely, 41%, or 2 out of every 5 girls in Year 4 say they are poor speakers of English.
- Almost all participating female students in secondary school report having advanced or average ability in reading English. The percentage of participating girls in primary school who feel their ability to read English is poor, ranges from 12% in Year 8, 17% in Year 6, to a high 38% in Year 4.
- A clear majority of participating girls say they have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa, ranging from 58% in Year 4 to 79% in Year 12. Concerningly, 11% of Year 4 high achieving girls, or one in every ten, say they have poor understanding of Gagana Samoa
- The majority of participating female students report advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa. However, there is still a sizeable proportion of participating girls in Year 4 (14%) which say their ability to speak Gagana Samoa is poor.
- The majority of participating girls in all year levels except Year 4 report an advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa.
- The majority of participating girls at every level have experienced problems with Mathematics (*‘yes’ and ‘sometimes’*). The highest proportion is found in Year 13, with 82% of high achieving girls experiencing problems with Mathematics.
- The majority of participating female students in all levels get all the help they need for their studies, as shown in their ‘yes’ responses.

### 5.2.5 Bullying and corporal punishment

- Between 7% and 21% of participating female students have experienced bullying by another student at school. The proportion is higher in primary school compared to secondary school. More than 20% of high achieving girls in Years 4 and 6 have experienced bullying by another student, which is a concerning number as it represents one in every five girls.
- An average of 36% of participating girls in primary school have experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school. This is extremely concerning as this number represents one in every three girls in the primary school.
- Among participating girls in secondary school, 20%, or one in every five girls in Year 12 say they have experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher. The proportion is higher for Year 13 girls, with 32% or approximately one in every three girls reporting this experience.

## 5.3 A comparison of patterns between responses from participating male students and responses from participating female students

### 5.3.1 Study Habits

Compared to participating male students (who are also low achieving students), a higher proportion of participating female students (who are also high achieving students) indicate they do this all or most of the time:

- Set study goals
- Have all the stationery they need to study
- Study with a friend or a group
- Start studying days before a test
- Dedicate time for studies
- Get a good night's sleep before a test (except for Year 6 girls)

### 5.3.2 Perceptions and experiences of the home environment

Compared to participating male students (who are also low achieving students), a higher proportion of participating female students (who are also high achieving students) indicate they experience this all or most of the time:

- Have peace at home to study (*large difference*)
- Have parents who always know their progress at school
- Have more time to do study compared to having to do chores, as their parents do chores
- Have many reading books and textbooks at home
- Have parents helping with reading at home (*higher proportions in primary school*)
- Have parents who talk with their teacher on progress
- Have not been able to communicate with parents at some point

A higher proportion of participating female students in secondary school compared to their participating male counterparts watch tv or video games at home, most or all of the time.

### 5.3.3 Perceptions and experiences of the school environment

Compared to participating female students, a lower proportion of participating male students experience the following most or all of the time:

- Feel that their teacher is caring
- Feel that their teacher treats them with respect
- Feel that their teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly (*same proportions in Year 12*)
- Teachers redeliver subjects in which they're at risk
- Learn new topics in class every day
- Feel free to share their ideas in class
- Feel that their teacher manages classroom behaviour well (*a small difference however*)
- Feel that their teacher appears prepared for class every day

Furthermore, up to 58% of participating girls in each level and up to 60% of participating boys in each participating school level felt that their teacher cared more for female students than male students

Additionally, a higher proportion of participating boys feel that their teacher is hard to talk to all or most of the time, compared to participating female students.

### 5.3.4 Reading, writing & other subjects

Compared to participating female students, a higher proportion of participating male students indicated that they:

- Have reading problems at all levels
- Have writing problems at all levels except Year 4
- Poor understanding of English
- Speak English poorly, especially in the primary levels
- Have poor ability to read English, especially in the primary levels
- Have advanced ability to understand Gagana Samoa, except in Year 4 and Year 6

Compared to participating female students, a higher proportion of participating male students in secondary school indicated that they:

- Have advanced ability to speak Gagana Samoa
- Have advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa (Year 13)

Compared to participating female students, a lower proportion of participating male students

- At all levels except Year 13, report advanced ability to read Gagana Samoa
- At all levels except Year 12, say they get all the help they need

Furthermore, equally high proportions of participating girls in Year 13 and participating boys in Year 13 have experienced problems with Mathematics, which is 82%, or more than four out of every five students.

### 5.3.5 Bullying and corporal punishment

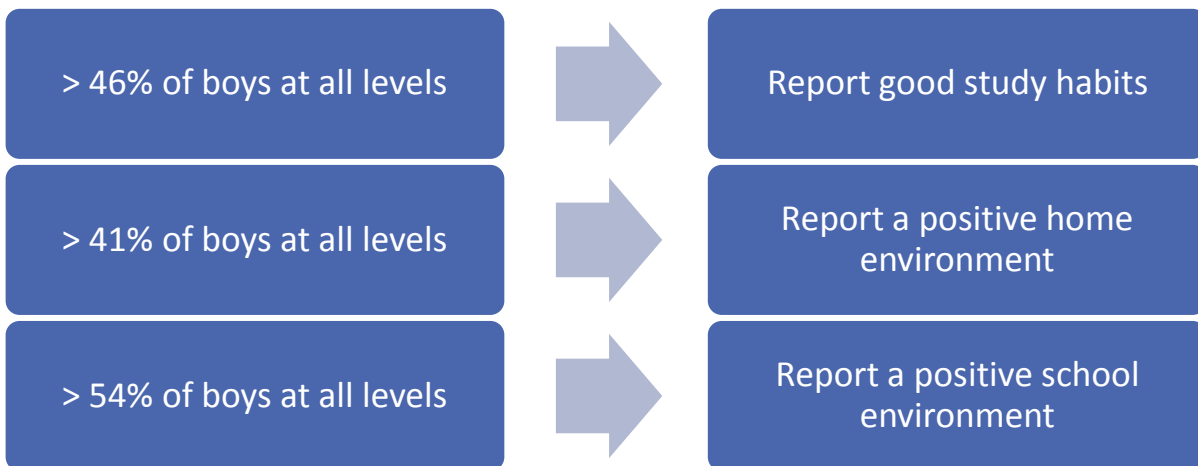
Compared to participating female students, a higher proportion of participating male students:

- Have been bullied by another student at school
- Have experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school

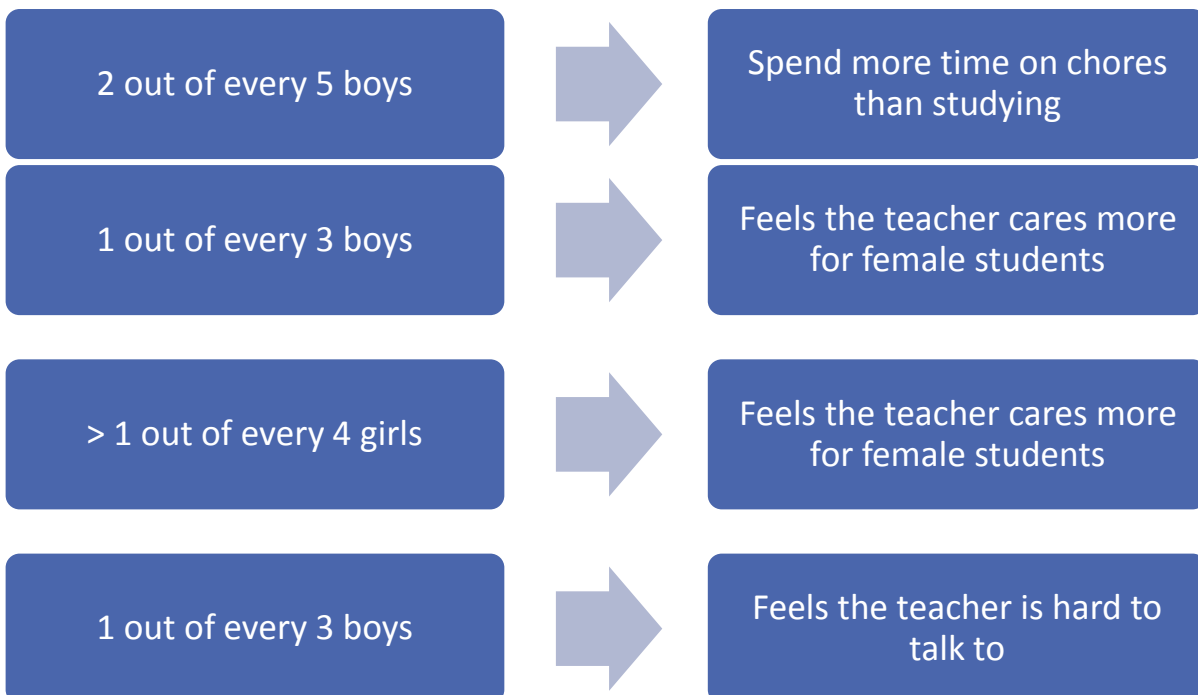
## 5.4 Meta-analysis of selected patterns

The following points are further highlighted to draw attention to some of the emerging patterns from a meta-analysis of the research findings. The patterns summarised in this section were extensively discussed with validation consultation participants.

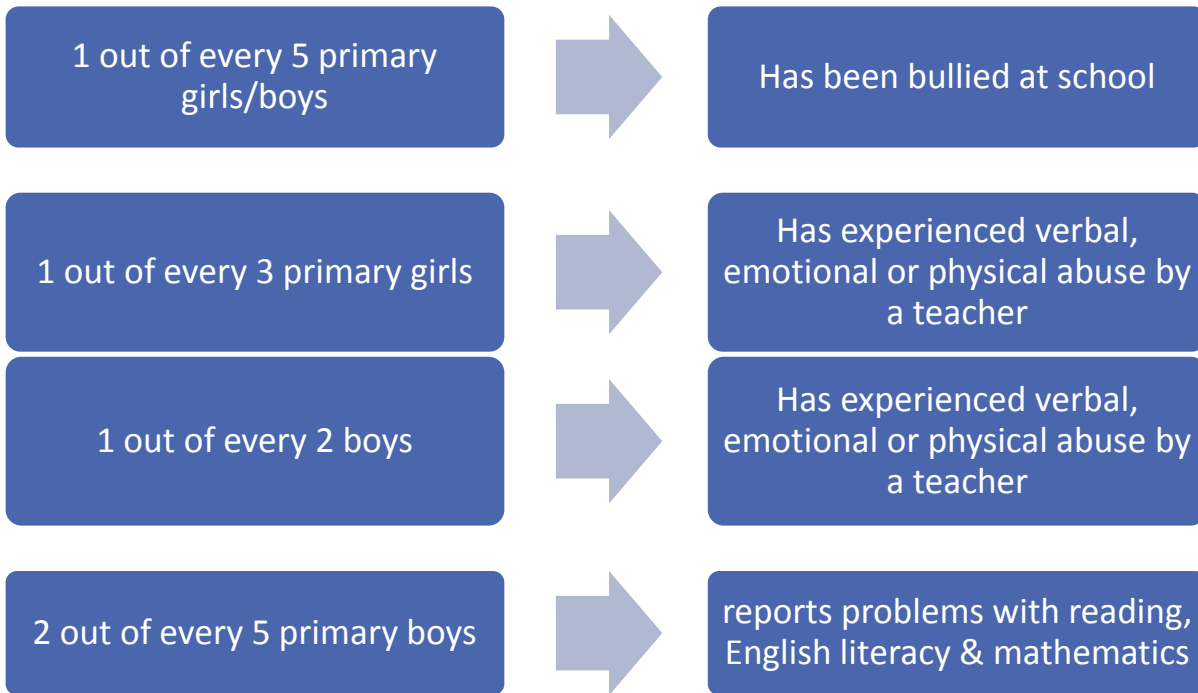
### 5.4.1. Positive highlights



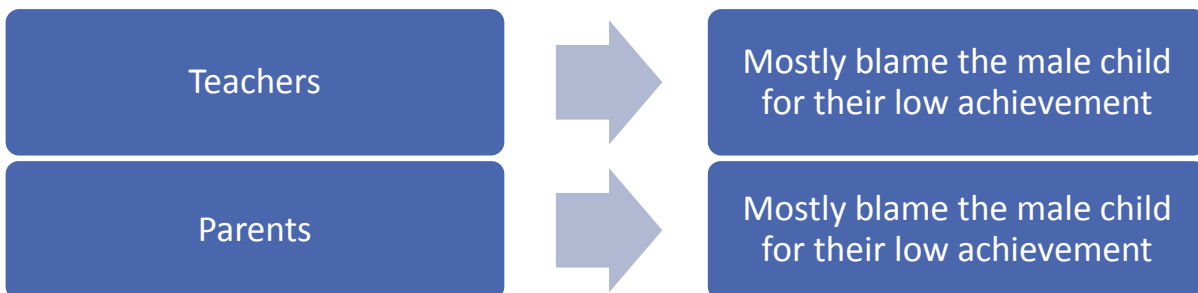
### 5.4.2 Not-so-positive highlights



### 5.4.3 Areas of concern



#### 5.4.4 Consistent negative perceptions of the male student



## CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Study habits

#### 6.1.1 Study habits: Boys are mostly doing the ‘right thing’

Boys’ responses indicate that the majority are doing ‘the right thing’ in relation to study habits most or all of the time. For example, just under half of participating male students in secondary school set study goals all or most of the time, with 48% (56) at Year 13 and 49% (58) in Year 12 responding in this manner. In addition, the majority of participating male students in all year levels indicated that they have access to needed stationery all or most of the time, and study ahead of a test most or all of the time (except in Year 4).

The majority of participating male students in Years 8 and in secondary school revise their notes all or most of the time. Their counterparts in the middle and lower primary levels also report revising their notes all or most of the time, but in much lower proportions.

Around half of participating male students in all levels report dedicating time to study most or all of the time, ranging from 47% (55) in Year 13 to 62% (170) in Year 8. More than half of participating male students in all levels report never or only sometimes spending more time on chores rather than studying. Finally, with the exception of Year 12, more than half of participating male students in all year levels get a good night’s sleep before a test all or most of the time.

#### 6.1.2 Difference between boys and girls

However, the research findings do show that girls exercise positive study habits much more than boys. For example, compared to girls in the same school level, a lower proportion of boys:

- Set study goals
- Revise their notes
- Study with a friend/group
- Study days ahead of a test
- Dedicate time for studies
- Get a good night’s sleep before a test

Despite the above, a higher proportion of boys at the same school level said that they have all the stationery they need to study.

Of concern, a higher proportion of boys than girls at every level say they spend more time on chores than studying.

The biggest difference between boys and girls at primary level relate to the question of whether they:

- Revise their notes (lower proportion for boys)

- Study ahead of a test (lower proportion for boys)
- Dedicate time for studies (lower proportion for boys)
- Spend more time on chores than studying (higher proportion for boys)

The biggest difference between boys and girls at secondary level relate to the question of whether they:

- Revise their notes (lower proportion for boys)
- Dedicate time for studies (lower proportion for boys)
- Spend more time on chores than studying (higher proportion for boys)

Validation consultations with school leadership and staff of selected schools indicated that all participants agreed with the findings relating to student study habits, and the differential patterns between boys and girls. Teachers commented that culturally, boys tended to be given much greater freedom than girls, and therefore were more likely to pursue other interests at the cost of devoting effort and time to school work and studies.

Teachers and parents agree that boys have less motivation to go to school and study – this is critical and needs further research to understand why boys are responding this way to schooling and learning.

## 6.2 Home environment

### 6.2.1 Positive aspects of boys' home environment

The majority of participating male students report a positive experience at home. For example, the majority of participating male students in all year levels reported that they have a peaceful home to study; however, around 10% in Years 8 (27) and Year 4 (30) say that they do not have a peaceful home to study. Similarly, according to participating male students, less than two thirds, but more than half of their parents know their school progress all or most of the time; however, for Year 4 – this proportion is less than half.

The majority of primary school participating male students indicate that their parents do chores all or most of the time, so they have time to study.

Just over half of Year 12 and Year 8 male respondents indicate that they have many reading books at home. A clear majority of their counterparts in Year 13 had a similar response, compared to under half of Year 4 and Year 6 male participating students

Parents helped with reading at home most or all of the time, for 85% (612) of male participating students in primary school, about 50% (61) of those in Year 12 and less than half (47) of those in Year 13.

More than half of participating male students in all levels responded that their parents communicate with their teachers regarding their progress all or most of the time



Between 15% (Year 6, 40) to 22% (Year 8, 59) of participating male students at each year level watch tv or play video games all or most of the time at home. The majority of participating male students, however, responded that they never or only sometimes watch tv or play video games at home. This finding does not resonate with feedback from school leadership and staff, who commented that in their opinion, boys tend to spend more time on technology, as one of the reasons for their continual distraction from school and study.

### 6.2.2 Negative aspects of boys' home environment

However, some aspects of male students' experiences at home are not so positive. For example, between 41% (Year 13, 47) and 51% (Year 12, 57) of participating boys report that they spend more time on chores compared to studying. This is a high percentage, indicating that boys tend to be responsible for home chores, with more than half in Year 12 responding this way.

More than 10% of participating male students at every year level except Year 13 responded that their teachers never talk with their teacher about their progress. Additionally, between 44% (Year 6, 124) to 53% (Year 8, 145) of participating male students in each year level had experienced not being able to communicate with their parents at some point.

Validation consultations with school leadership and staff indicate that boys tend to be more disruptive and non-attentive in class – something that participants attribute to how boys are raised in the home environment. School staff had strong opinions about behavioural patterns learnt at home, that then are more obvious in the school environment when boys are away from home. According to some staff, boys' disruptive behaviour were the result of lax parenting and factors in the home environment.

## 6.3 School environment

### 6.3.1 Boys have a more negative experience at school

Although boys respond mostly positively about their experiences at home and at school (except for being responsible for chores), they do report a more negative experience at school compared to girls. For example, the majority feel their teachers care more for female students in the classroom. An average of one in two boys in primary school has experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher at school. For Year 13, the number of boys who experienced the same is roughly one in three. For Year 12 boys, just under half of those who participated indicated they also experienced physical, verbal or emotional abuse from a teacher.

Validation consultations with teachers and school leadership indicate that they have mixed feedback about the negative experience reported by boys at school. Some teachers admitted that they are still using corporal punishment for boys, as a way of combating negative behaviour. Other teachers disagree, based on the perspective that they do not use corporal punishment in their classrooms as it is against the law. However, all agree that the law outlawing the use of corporal punishment is clear and should be

followed at all times. In spite of the feedback from school leadership and teachers, the large proportion of boys who have experienced corporal punishment from a teacher, is still very concerning, and the feedback from students should still be considered seriously.

Given that the boys who participated in this research are selected from low achieving groups of students and schools, in view of their mostly positive responses about their home and school environments – it is possible that boys have internalized their underachievement and blame themselves for their underachievement and are struggling in school but do not know what to do about this. For example, the majority indicate they have all the help they need, and the resources they need at home to study, which clearly is not the case given their low achievement. It is possible that boys feel they need to say positive things particularly about their home experience, even when the opposite may be true. For example, parents in Savaii indicated that they experience financial difficulties providing for their children’s education – this does not seem to be reflected in students’ responses. Related findings from international research indicate that “generally, it appears that the gender gap in educational attainment partly results from greater sensitivity of boys to difficulties in the home, and childhood disadvantage” (Welmond & Gregory, 2021, p. 26).

### 6.3.2 Year 4 is a particularly difficult level for boys

Boys’ learning difficulties start in primary school with reading, writing, English and Mathematics. Year 4 seems a particularly difficult year for boys, where for example, the majority experience problems reading, writing, English, never set study goals and do not tend to study ahead of a test. In addition to their learning difficulties, one in five male students at Year 4 has experienced bullying, and one in two has experienced physical, verbal and emotional abuse from a teacher at school. It is possible that this is the year level when boys start disengaging from schooling and learning because of their negative experiences.

## 6.4 Cultural and gender factors

### 6.4.1 Existence of a gender stereotype

It is clear from the self-reporting by students that boys are given the bulk of responsibility of home chores. Boys are socialised into a masculine gender role very early in their lives, such that boys are seen as stronger, having the responsibility to be the ‘malosi’ or ‘strength’ of the family. Parental and teacher perspectives that boys are given more freedom to do what they want, with less emphasis on their schooling and formal study – align with this gender expectation.

In response to the question of why boys’ achievement lags behind girls achievement in national exams, the responses in this research indicate a strong gender stereotype exists in the minds of parents and teachers. For example, the responses of teachers and parents paint a strongly negative picture of male students and a strongly positive picture of female students. Their comments suggest that they consider

boys to have mostly negative attitudes towards school and authority, and that female students are the opposite, and this in the minds of teachers and parents is the reason why boys underachieve, and girls achieve success.

#### 6.4.2 Boys are blamed for their continual underachievement

Parents and teachers' responses lay the blame for male student underachievement on the student's mindset and behaviour. In contrast however, what participating boys say about themselves and their study habits disagrees with what parents and teachers say. The majority of participating boys indicated that they do study ahead of a test and set aside time for study for example.

It is interesting that both boys and girls feel their teachers care more for female students in the classroom and teachers' responses suggest negative stereotyping of male students – there is need for research to focus on how teachers teach and treat boys, and how this impacts boys' learning. The existence of a gender stereotype is a problem, as the international literature suggests that stereotypical thinking influences the behaviour of teachers and students. Gender stereotypes tend to be reinforced through the behaviour of teachers and students. There is also need for social research to explore how negative gender stereotyping by teachers and parents influences boys' behaviour in school and out of school.

#### 6.4.3 Cultural socialisation within Samoan society

Comments by school leadership and teachers at the validation consultations in Upolu and Savaii indicate that cultural factors and related gender stereotypes, and their impact on boys engagement in school, are a complex issue. For instance, validation participants commented that boys are treated differently at home, hence their behaviour will be different at school. Boys are socialised into traditional male roles within Samoan society, which is strongly gender-differentiated. Girls are also socialised into their traditional female role within Samoan society which is to be the 'pae ma le auli', or the peacemaker and keeper of harmony within the home. Aligning with the expectation of keeping harmony within the home and elsewhere, girls are socialised into roles that are less likely to create conflict, or confrontation. Boys, on the other hand, may be more socialised into roles that spend more time outside the home and therefore less readiness to operate within the structured school environment.

Research by Welmund and Gregory (2021) into educational underachievement by boys and men in different contexts around the world identify 'social norms' as a contributing factor to this issue. They suggest that in societies where social norms encourage the development of masculine identity tied to physical strength and social dominance, activities that are needed to succeed in school are seen as 'feminine' and less attractive for males. Hence males in such societies are discouraged by social norms from activities such as reading and behaving (i.e. staying still) inside the classroom for most of the school day.

## 6.5 Problems with literacy and numeracy

There are clear differences between boys and girls in their responses to questions relating to difficulty with reading, speaking and understanding the English and Samoan languages. This is particularly the case in primary schools.

Validation participants were in overwhelming agreement with the findings regarding students problems with literacy and numeracy. School leadership and staff suggested that there should be direct interventions to improve the reading ability of both boys and girls. They were of the view that improvement in reading ability for all students would directly impact their achievement in all their other subjects.

## 6.6 Other factors

### 6.6.1 Possibility of boys being more sensitive to negative home and school environments

It is possible that boys and girls experience the same thing differently, or that boys are more sensitive to certain experiences than girls. For example, a similar percentage of boys and girls experience not being able to communicate with their parents at some point, and the same proportions experience difficulty with Mathematics in Year 13 (82%). This similar experience is reported by both participating boys and girls, although girls are performing better in national assessments.

Furthermore, approximately one third of boys at all levels and more than a quarter of girls at all levels feel that their teachers care more for female students in the classroom. This perception of being less cared for in the classroom setting possibly contributes to less motivation by boys to engage fully in school and educational activities.

As an example of related findings in overseas research, Welmond and Gregory (2021, p. 28) stated that “research has found boys to be more affected by school quality than girls, more harmed by bad schools, and able to gain more from strong schools... boys appear to be more affected by learning conditions, and more disturbed by classroom disciplinary problems and school organizational issues than girls”. In other words, boys in other contexts seem to be particularly sensitive to negative home and school environments, with impacts seen in their disengagement and underachievement in schooling and education.

### 6.6.2 Combination of negative factors

It is possible that no single factor is responsible for the issue of lower achievement by boys compared to girls. It is likely to be the result of a combination of the following factors that contribute to boys disengagement with school, and hence lower achievement scores in national examinations. These factors include:

- Issues with reading, speaking and understanding the English language in particular

- More likelihood of corporal punishment
- Feeling of being neglected by the teacher in favour of female students
- Burden of heavy chores at home, responsibility for 'outside' work
- Socialisation into traditional male role of being active outside the home/structured environment

Research into this issue on behalf of the World Bank (Welmond & Gregory, 2021) identified three overlapping factors contributing to boys (and men) underachievement in education, which were labour market factors, social norms, and education system characteristics.

In view of the possible combination of negative contributing factors, it is likely that a multi-pronged approach is required to tackle the issue of boys underachievement. Such a multi-pronged approach must include changes in the home environment, school environment, and in the students' study habits. Validation consultation participants referred to the success triangle of the home, the school, and the student, as an example of partnership needed to help improvement achievement for boys (as well as girls). Furthermore, more research is needed on the influence of current labour market patterns (such as the attraction of unskilled overseas seasonal work) and Samoa's social norms on boys' decisions to disengage and underachieve in school.

### Limitations of the study

Notwithstanding its success, this study has certain potential limitations; hence, there is a need for additional studies on this subject in the future. Because the study is mostly based on a sample study, any of the sample study's limitations apply. Another difficulty the researchers encountered during the original investigation was persuading parents to participate. The bulk of parents who took part were mothers, with only a few fathers representing both parents' opinions. Teachers indicated that this was typical procedure for their schools' parent-teacher event or meetings.

Another problem was the secondary analysis, which was complicated by the scarcity of research on this topic in Samoa and the rest of the Pacific region. Finding credible materials for this study was incredibly challenging due to the fact that many academic papers in Google Scholar and many e-libraries demand a subscription. The bad weather that occurs during the data collection period is another barrier that slows the process and increases the time allotted for each school. The teams' route was delayed because of river flooding and muddy conditions, thus other schools scheduled for that day had to be probed the following day.

Even if sample limitations exist, a well-defined study technique was developed to overcome them. To meet the research objectives, a representative sample was chosen at random, and a defined statistical design was used. Despite the limited number of fathers who participated, those who did were representative, and their responses were most likely similar to what the teachers had to say. In terms of

secondary sources, additional information was obtained from our National Library, and various free online credible e-sources were employed to assist this study. Despite severe weather, the schools that were rescheduled for the following days were able to bring together all of the participants required for the study.

Regardless of its limitations, this research study has been peer reviewed by a technical advisor and validated by participants through consultations, and the findings are identified trustworthy and genuine.

## CHAPTER 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to adopt an empowering approach to addressing the issue, as compliance-focused interventions are less likely to be successful in the long term. For instance, top down instructions from the Ministry are less likely to be well-received by teachers and school leaders and will only encourage surface-level compliance. An empowering approach focuses on changing behaviour through empowering changes in how teachers think about their work, and in how students think about themselves. Furthermore, an empowering approach involves teachers in discussing the solution to the issue of male underachievement, as they are in control of the teaching and learning experience for the student. The following are a list of recommendations based on the findings in this report, classified into immediate term, medium term and long term interventions.

### Recommendation 1 (Immediate term)

The findings of this report indicates that primary school literacy and numeracy support for boys is critical at this point. It is recommended that existing literacy and numeracy interventions are strengthened and reviewed to find out whether their implementation has been effective. Other interventions could be explored to support literacy and numeracy support for boys, in particular in primary school. An example of an intervention that could be explored is having a dedicated daily reading time in schools, and other activities that teachers could do to help make reading fun.

### Recommendation 2 (Immediate term)

It is strongly recommended that all effort is made to eliminate bullying in schools. Some activities that might contribute towards this goal include a review of the implementation of the MESC School Governance Framework 2018-2028 along with the Safe School Policy. The message about eliminating bullying must be disseminated to principals and teachers at every opportunity, for example through professional development activities organised by the Ministry as well as the upcoming Teachers' Conference.

### Recommendation 3 (Immediate term)

The findings of this research indicate that about half of all boys in primary school experience physical, verbal, or emotional abuse from a teacher at school. This percentage represents one in every two boys in primary school. The incidence of physical, verbal or emotional abuse for male participants in the secondary levels is not much lower, with 33% in Year 13 having experienced this (one in every three boys), and almost half of all Year 12 boys. These statistics represent an unacceptable situation in schools.

It is therefore recommended that measures are taken to eliminate physical, verbal and emotional abuse of students by teachers in schools. Some of the activities that may contribute to this include the enforcement of the zero corporal punishment law, and discussions with the Teachers' Council on ways to discourage and eliminate physical, verbal, and emotional abuse of students by teachers in schools.

### Recommendation 4 (Medium term)

Teachers and parents' responses in this research indicates that boys experience demotivation early in their schooling experience and are possibly negatively influenced by teachers' treatment of them in class. In addition, the findings indicate that teachers treat male and female students differently in schools, and that this treatment may be biased towards female students. There is a need to find out more about teacher practices that both increase motivation and engagement of students, as well as demotivate and decrease student engagement.

It is therefore recommended that a collaborative action research project be undertaken, involving the Ministry, the NUS Faculty of Education, and selected school leaders, to focus on:

- Identifying and changing harmful teaching practices that de-motivate male students and increase disengagement
- Identifying and supporting positive teaching practices that increase the motivation and engagement of all students

### Recommendation 5 (Medium term)

The data gathered for this research is quite substantial and is a rich source of information on students' study habits, and student perceptions of their home and school environment, as well as other information that could be analysed in terms of family socio-economic backgrounds, and teacher and parents' perceptions by district and region.

It is therefore recommended that district level reports be created from this data, to indicate patterns in study habits and experiences of home and school across different districts, and for these reports to be shared with School Support Advisors (asiasiaoga), to inform their support work.

### Recommendation 6 (Long term)

The findings of this research indicate the existence of a gender stereotype that regards male students as less interested and less capable in school, and female students as more interested and more capable in school. There is a need to find out how such stereotypes affects teachers, parents, and students, as well as how to combat the negative impacts of such stereotypes.

It is recommended that a research project be undertaken in the long term, to focus on gender stereotypes and how they influence teacher and student behaviour and student performance in schools, as well as how to combat the negative impacts of such stereotypes on student achievement in general and male student achievement in particular.



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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Proposed Budget

### Estimated costs

Item	Cost
(Desk Review)	
1. Printing of tools and other administrative documents	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
(Data collection & entry & analysis)	
• Accommodations <sup>2</sup>	
- Week 1: (10 x \$100/room x 5 nights)	\$5,000.00
- Week 2: (10 x \$120/room x 5 nights)	\$6,000.00
• Meals (Savaii only)	
- Week 1: (10 x \$30 x 5 nights)	\$1,500.00
- Week 2: (10 x \$30 x 5 nights)	\$1,500.00
• Petrol & Transportation <sup>3</sup> (Upolu and Savaii)	
- Car petrol (\$100 x 4 weeks)	
- Car Tickets to Savaii (\$190 x 2 weeks)	\$400.00

<sup>2</sup> Research Team comprises of 10 people

<sup>3</sup> Including boat tickets to and from Savaii

ESRC Research Funding Application Form\_09-2020

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- Boat tickets (9 people x \$24 x 2 weeks)

\$380.00

\$432.00

• Overnight allowances

- Savaii only (10 x \$25 x 10 nights)

\$2,500.00

(Report Writing)

1. Printing

**\$1,000.00**

(Presentation to MESC Core Executive)

No budget

(Presentation to ESWG)

implication

(Report to be tabled at ESAC)

**TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS**

**\$19,712.00SAT**

## Appendix 2: Student Questionnaire



**Matagaluega o A'oga Taaloga ma Aganu'u  
(Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture)**

**Gender Achievement Gap Study 2021  
Fesili Su'esu'e mo Tamaiti (Student Questionnaire)**

<b>Faamatalaga Masani / General Information</b>		
A'oga / School .....	Nu'u/Village.....	
Itupa/ Gender: Teine Female	Tama Male	
Itumalo / District.....Itulagi faalea'oa'oga / Educational Region .....		
<b>Vaega 1/Section 1. O oe / About You</b>		
1. O le a lau vasega? (Togi faasa'o se pusa se tasi) What year level are you in at school? <i>(Please tick one box)</i>		
Vasega /Year	4      6      8      12      13	
	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Silasila i le lisi lenei o mataupu ma ta'u mai poo a ni mataupu se tolu e pito sili ona e fiafia iai ma ni mataupu se tolu e pito sili ona e lē fiafia ai. <i>(Faamolemole togi faasa'o pusa tai tolu i le itu)</i> Please look at the following list of subjects and tell us which three subjects you like most and which three subjects you like least <i>(Please tick three boxes in each column)</i>		
	Ou te fiafia ai Like most	Ou te lē fiafia ai Like least
Faaperetania/ English		
Matematika/ Maths		
Gagana Samoa/ Samoan		
Faasaaienisi/ Science		
Soifuaga o Tagata/ Social Science		
Soifua Maloloina ma le Tino/ Health and Physical Education		
Tusiata/ Visual Arts		
Meaai ma le Suisui/ Food and Textiles		
Faa-Komepiuta/ Computer Studies		
Mamanu ma Tekenalosi/ Design and Technology		
Agriculture Science		
Biology		

Thank you for your honest responses

Page 1

KJ

Chemistry		
Physics		
History		
Geography		
Accounting		
Economics		

3. O e fiafia e fai au meaaoga? (*Togi faasa'o le pusa e tasi*)

How much do you like schoolwork? (*Tick one box*)

Matuā lē fiafia Not at all	E lē fiafia tele Not much	Fiafia Fair	Fiafia feololo Fine	Matua fiafia tele Greatly
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. O iai ni ou faafitauli i mataupu nei?

Do you have problems with any of these subjects?

	Leai/No	Nisi taimi/Sometimes	Ioe/ Yes
Faitautusi/Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tusitusi/Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gagana Peretania/English	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Matematika/Mathematics			
Gagana Samoa/Samoan			
Faasaienisi/Science			

5. O le a le gagana e te malamalama lelei ai? (*tautala, faitau ma tusitusi*)

What language(s) can you understand best? (*speak, read and write*)

	Gagana Peretania/ English			Gagana Samoa/ Samoan		
	Leai/ No	Feololo/ Average	Ioe/ Yes	Leai/ No	Feololo/ Average	Ioe/ Yes
Malamalama Understand						
Tautala Speak						
Faitau Read						
Tusitusi Write						

6. O e maua uma fesoasoani o e mana'omia?

Do you get all the help you need?

	Leai/ No	Nisi Taimi/ Sometimes	Ioe/Yes
I le A'oga (totonu o le vasega) At School (in class)			
I le aiga At home			

Thank you for your honest responses

Page 2



R1

7. O e maua se siosiomaga filemu i le faiga o au meaaoga?

Do you find needed peace to work well?

	Leai / No	Nisi Taimi / Sometimes	Io / Yes
I le A'oga (totonu o le vasega) At School (in class)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I le aiga At home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. (a) Pe na sauaina oe e isi tamaiti i le a'oga? (fasi, taufaifai, faalumaina, faafefe mmf)

(a) Have you been bullied by another student(s) in school?

Leai/ No	Nisi Taimi/ Sometimes	Io/Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8(e) Afai o lau tali I le fesili 8(a) o le ioe, faamolemole faailoa mai le ituaiga suaga na e aafia ai

(b) If you answered yes to question 8(a), please identify the type of bullying you have been experienced.

-----

9(a) Pe na sauaina oe e se faiaoga i le a'oga? (fasi, taufaifai, faalumaina, faafefe mmf)

(a) Have you been bullied by a teacher in school?

Leai/ No	Io/Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. (e) Afai o lau tali I le fesili 9(a) o le ioe, faamolemole faailoa mai le ituaiga sauaga na e aafia ai.

(b) If you answered yes to question 9(a), please identify the type of abuse you have experienced.

-----

10. (a) Pe na faasala oe mai le aoga pe na faafaigaluega mamafa oe i le taimi o le a'oga

(a) Have you been on detention or hard labour at school during school hours?

Leai / No	Io / Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10 (e) Afai sa e tali ioe i le fesili 10, o le a le umi na faasala ai oe?

(b) If you answered yes to Question 10, how long have you been on detention at school?

Tasi le aso One day	Silia ma le aso More than one day	Tasi le vaiaso One Week	Silia ma le vaiaso More than one week
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Faiga masani o au meaaoga Self-Study Practice	Leai Never 0	Nisi Taimi Sometimes 1	Tele o Taimi Most of the times 2	Taimi Uma Always 3
1. Ou te faataatitia sini e ao ona ou ausia i a'u suesuega I set study goals for myself				
2. Ou te su'esu'e i se vaega to'afilemu e aunoa ma ni mea e tosina ese ai. I study where it's quiet with little distractions				
3. E iai uma vaega ou te mana'omia pe a ou suesue (peni, pepa,				

Thank you for your honest responses

Page 3

R1

tusia'oga, initaneti ma isi) I have all the stationaries I need when I study (pen, papers, text books, internet, etc)				
4. E fai ma ou malolo pe a ou su'esu'e I take short breaks when I study				
5. E masani ona ou toe iloiloi/tusia I a'u lava upu mataupu sa fai ina ia ou malamalama lelei ai. I always revised my notes in my own words to understand them better				
6. E matou te su'esu'e faatasi ma se uo pe su'esu'e o se vaega I study with a friend or a group				
7. E mae'a ma ave a'u meaaoga i le taimi faatulagaina I complete and turn in my assignments on time				
8. Ou te su'esue mamao ao le'i faia se su'ega . I start studying days before I have to take a test				
9. Ou te faaalu le tele o le taimi e su'esu'e ai I dedicate great time for studies				
10. Ou te faaalu le tele o le taimi i le faiga o feau nai lo le su'esu'e. I spend more times on chores at home rather than studying				
11. E lava lelei la'u moe i le po o'u usu ai i le su'ega I get a good night's sleep before a test				

**Vaega 2: Si'osi'omaga o le A'oga**  
**Section 2: School Environment**

Leai  
Never  
0

Nisi o taimi  
Sometimes  
1

Tele o taimi  
Most of the times  
2

Taimi uma  
Always  
3

- Ou te lagona le matua amanaia/naunau mai o le matou faiaoga  
My teacher in this class makes me feel that she/he really cares.  0  1
- E tele lava ina faaalu le taimi o le matou faiaoga I le a'oa'oina o tamaita'i  
My teacher cares mostly about female students
- E taumafai lava le matou faiaoga e malamalama i o matou lagona  
My teacher tries to understand how we (students) feel
- E faaaloalo lo'u faiaoga ia te a'u  
Teacher in this class treats me with respect
- E tele auala eseese e faamatala lelei ai e lo'u faiaoga mataupu taitasi i le matou vasega  
My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic we cover in class.
- E manino lelei le auala e a'oa'o ai e le matou faiaoga mataupu faigata  
My teacher delivers difficult lessons clearly
- E toe a'oa'o e lou faiaoga mataupu ou te vaivai ai  
My teacher re-deliver subjects I am at risk at
- E tele mataupu matou te a'oa'oina i le vasega i aso uma  
We learn a lot of topics every day in our class
- E matou te a'oa'oina le auala e toe faasa'o ai a matou mea sese  
In class we learn to correct our mistakes
- E sa'oloto tamaiti uma e faasoa o latou metotia i le vasega  
Students are free to share their ideas in class
- E le manaia lesone o loo a'oa'o i vasega

Thank you for your honest responses

Page 4

Lessons learned in class are so boring

12. E lelei le puleaina e le faiaoga o amioga i le potua'oga.  
My teacher manages classroom behaviour well

13. E faigata ona ou talanoa i lo'u faiaoga  
My teacher is hard to talk to

14. E faailoa manino mai e le matou faiaoga vaega uma o le a aga'i  
jai le fuataga ma i'uga o su'ega (fuataga, galuega faatino,  
suega & poloketi)  
My teacher clearly identify grading scores (for our assessments,  
assignments, tests & projects) in advance

15. E foliga saunia ma lava tapena lo'u faiaoga mo vasega i aso uma  
My teacher appears prepared for class everyday

### Vaega 3. Si'osi'omaga I le Aiga Section 3. Home Environment

1(a) O le a le galuega a lou tama (Toi le pusa talafegai)  
(b) What does your father do for living?

\_\_\_\_\_

1(e) O le a le maualuga o aoga na ausia e lou tama?  
(b) What is the highest level of education your father achieved?

Aoga Tulaalua  
Primary Education

Kolisi  
College

Iunivesite  
University

Ou te le iloa  
Don't Know

2 (a) O le a le galuega a lou tina  
(a) What does your mother do for living?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 (e) O le a le maualuga o aoga na ausia e lou tina?  
(b) What is the highest level of education your mother achieved?

Aoga Tulaalua  
Primary Education

Kolisi  
College

Iunivesite  
University

Ou te le iloa  
Don't Know

	Leai Never	Nisi o taimi Sometimes	Tele o taimi Most of the times	Taimi uma Always
	0	1	2	3
3. E iloa lelei e ou matua le tulaga o lou taumafai i le aoga My parents always know my progress at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. E fesoasoani ou matua io a'u meaaoga i le fale i aso uma My parents help me with my studies at home everyday	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. E fai uma e o'u matua feau ina ia tele ai le taimi e faaalu i a'u meaaoga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your honest responses

Page 5

R1

My parents do all the chores so I can spend more times on my studies					
6.	E manana'o o'u matua ou te faia uma feau i lo matou aiga tusa pe le faia ai a'u mea a'oga My parents expected me to do all the chores at home and less times on my studies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	E fesoasoani o'u matua i la'u faitau tusi i le fale My parents help me with my reading at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	E faamalo mai o'u matua pe a ou lelei i le a'oga My parents compliment me when I do well at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	E masani ona talanoa o'u matua ma lo'u faiaoga poo faapefea mai le tulaga o la'u a'oga My parents always talk with my teacher on my progress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	E saunia e o'u matua mea uma ou te mana'omia mo le a'oga My parents provide everything I need for school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Ou te auai i vasega faapopopo e ese mai la'u A'oga I attend extra tutorials outside of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	E tele taimi o o'u matua e faaalu i isi galuega nai lo le mafuta mai ia te a'u. My parents spend more times on other matters rather than me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	E faigata ona ou talanoa i o'u matua I hardly communicate with my parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	E masani ona ou vave taunuui i le aoga I always get to school on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Ou te matamata TV/ma taalo i taaloga video i le fale i aso uma I watch television/ videogames every day at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Ioe/ Yes		Leai/ No	
16.	E tele tusi faitau ma tusi a'oga i le matou fale There are many reading and text books at my house	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Vaega 4: Manatu faaalua</b>					
<b>Section 4: Suggestion</b>					
1.	I le avea ai o se tama ma teine a'oga, o ā ni auuala lelei ete iloa e ono faaleleia ai le taumafai a tama aoga, i aoga? What best ways you know as a student, will reduce the issue of poor performance amongst male students?				
_____					
_____					
_____					
_____					
_____					



## Appendix 3: Principals and Teachers Questionnaire



R3 &amp; R4

**Matagaluega o A'oga Taaloga ma Aganu'u**  
**(Ministry of Education Sports and Culture)**

**Autu:** O le faamoemoega o le Matagaluega o A'oga Taaloga ma Aganu'u, o le aoina lea o faamatalaga ma finagalo mai a'oga Tulaga lua ma Kolisi i le mafuaga e maualuluga ai togi e ausia e tamaita'i i fuataga ma i'uga o su'ega i le a'oga nai lo alii.

**Purpose:** *The Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture aims to gather the views and explanations from Primary schools and colleges on the reasons why female students achieve higher marks in assessments and school works than male students.*

- Faailoa mai pe ua e malie e tali i fesili nei.
- Please state whether you agree to answer these questions by ticking one of the boxes below

loe / Yes       Leai / No

**Section 1: Faamatalaga Masani /General Information**

A'oga/School: \_\_\_\_\_ Itumalo/ District: \_\_\_\_\_

Tulaga: Faiaoga       Pule Lua       Pule A'oga   
 Position: Teacher      Vice Principal      Principal

Tausaga o le auunaga / Years of Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Fesili 1 Faailoa mai lou matua ua iai i vaega o taua i lalo

Question 1. State your age group

- 30 tausaga pe itiiti ifo / 30 years or below
- 31 – 45 tausaga / 31-45 years
- 46 – 60 tausaga / 46-60 years
- Silia ma le 60 tausaga / Over 60 years

Fesili 2/ O oe o se alii poo se tamaita'i?

Question 2. Are you a male or female?

- Tamaita'i / Female
- Alii / Male

R3 &amp; R4

Fesili 3: E faapefea ona e una'ia le naunau o lau vasega i le ola a'oa'oina?  
 Question 3. How do you motivate your students to learn?

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Fesili 4: O ā taimi e masani ona e iloiloina ai le iloa o lau vasega i lesona o loo e a'oa'oina? *(Togi le pusa talafeagai)*  
 Question 4. How often you evaluate your students' knowledge on the lessons you delivered? *(Tick the appropriate box)*

- I le faaiuga o le aso / By the end of each day
- I le faaiuga o lunita taitasi / By the end of each unit
- I le faaiuga o kuata tuma / By the end of every term
- I le su'ega ogatotonu ma le faaiuga o le tausaga / By their mid-year and final exams

Fesili 5: O faapefea ona e feagai ma tamaiti e te matauina e vaivai i lau vasega?  
 Question 5: How do you deal with students identified to be 'at risk' in your class

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Fesili 6: I lou silafia faafaia'oga, aisea e matele ai ina tulaga lelei tamaita'i i le a'oga?  
 Question 6: Based on your knowledge as a teacher, why do female students always perform well in school?

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Fesili 7: O le a sou silafia i mafuaaga o le maualalo o le tulaga o alii i lau vasega ma le a’oga?

Question 7: What do you know contribute to male students’ poor performance in your class and school work?

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Fesili 8: O a ni auala patino e te silafia ma fautuaina e ono faaitiitia ai lenei luitau o le maualalo o le tulaga ausia e alii i tulaga tau a’oa’oga?

Question 11: What highly recommending and certain ways you think would minimize the challenge of male students’ underachievement in education?

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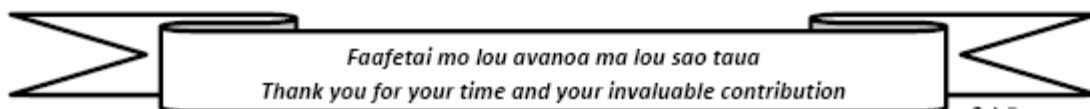
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Appendix 4: Parents Interview Guide

R2



**MATAGALUEGA O A'OGA TAALOGA MA AGANU'U**  
**(Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture)**

**Eseesega o Tulaga Ausia e Itupa o Ali'i ma Tamaita'i**  
**Gender Achievement Gap Study 2021**  
**Faatanoaga ma Matua / Parents' Interview**

A'oga / School: \_\_\_\_\_ Itumalo / District: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Aso / Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Taimi / Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 To'oto'o o le Aso / PPRD Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Fai faamaumauga / PPRD Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_

**FESILI TATA'I (GUIDING QUESTIONS)**

Fesili 1: O ā ni faafitauli poo ni luitau o loo feagai pea ma outou matua i le fa'aa'ogaina o le fanau?  
 Question 1: What difficulties or challenges you encountered as parents/guardians/care givers in supporting your children's education?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fesili 2: I lou silafia faamatua, o a ni vaauga patino e te matauina I lau tama teine po o teine a'oga foi e te silafia o loo fesoasopani i lona taulaumanuia I le a'oga?  
 Question 2: Based on your knowledge as a parent, what characteristics of your daughters or the female students that contribute for their success in educational achievement?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Fesili 6: O a ni auala sili e te silafia ma fautuaina e ono faaitiitia ai lenei luitau o le maualalo o le tulaga ausia e alii i tulaga tau a'oa'oga?

Question 6: What are the best and highly recommended ways you suggest to minimise the challenge of male students' educational underachievement?

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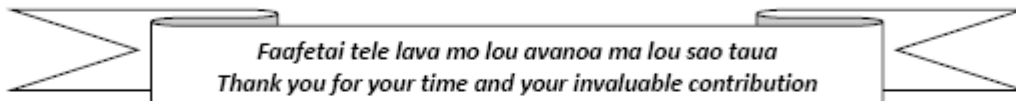
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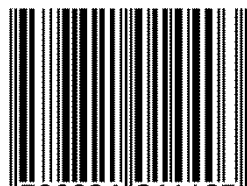




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